PLANET CAT

PSSCHHOOOOM!

WE LOVE YO

HOORAY!

WAHOO!

HERO!

LOVE YOU!

LADIES AND GENTLECATS, HERE TO INTRODUCE THE GUEST OF HONOR... THE *PRESIDENT OF THE CAT SYSTEM!*

MY PEOPLE! WE ARE HERE TODAY TO WELCOME HOME OUR GREATEST AND MOST BELOVED HERO!

A ~~*FEARLESS*~~ CAT WHOSE BRAVERY AND COURAGE KNOW NO END!

THE CAT WHO HELPED FREE THE PLANET *LYNX* FROM THEIR SUFFERING AGAINST THE MANDRILL MARAUDERS!

HOORAH!!

THE NOBLE CAT WHO SINGLE-HANDEDLY ERADICATED THE HOSTILE THREATS ON *PANTHER* PRIME!

YAAAHH!!

WOOHH!

AND THE COURAGEOUS CAT WHO... SNIFF! HELPED FREE PLANET *TIGER* FROM THE GRIPS OF ALIEN OPPRESSION!

RRWOOAAARR!!

LADIES AND GENTLECATS!

THE *VENERABLE...*

THE *HONORABLE...*

AHEM...

...A-AND *MOST HANDSOME*

...AND *AVAILABLE!*

COMMANDER KITTY!

IT'S GOOD TO BE BACK!

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COMMANDERKITTY.COM

COLOR BY BRIAN REYNOLDS

MEOW!
555-4254
COMMANDER! IT IS AN HONOR TO MEET Y--
...DOIN' A HECK OF A JOB, BUTTERBALL.
...AND KEEP THOSE GIRLS OUT OF MY WAY 'TIL I'M DONE MY BLOODY SPEECH!

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THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR LOVE AND SUPPORT...
...I'M JUST PROUD TO DO MY PART FOR ALL CATS EVERYWHERE!
BUT THERE IS ONE THING THAT WE, AS A UNITED FAMILY MUST NOW REMEMBER...
ALL CATS... FROM THE TINIEST TABBY TO THE GREATEST LION ARE PART OF MY FAMILY. AND I WOULD DO THE SAME FOR YOU ALL!
I OWN YOU...
UNFURL!
GASPS OF AWE!!
... AND HORROR!!

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YOU SCUM HAVE HAD IT PRETTY SOFT UP TO NOW!
BUT IF YOU THINK BEING GRAND MARSHALL AT THE CHRISTMAS PARADE IS GONNA DO IT THIS TIME...
THINK AGAIN!!!
THE CAT SYSTEM IS NOW MY EMPIRE!
BOW DOWN BEFORE ME!
BOW DOWN!!!
WE HEAR! AND WE OBEY!!!
DO WITH US WHAT YOU WILL, O GREAT ONE!
I WANT TO HAVE YOUR KITTENS, O MIGHTY LORD!!!
OH WOE IS US!
ALL HAIL OUR NEW MASTER!!
MY ARMS ARE WEAK, MY LEGS ARE FEEBLE, BUT THEY ARE YOURS TO COMMAND!
HEH HEH...
GROOVY.

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OY! YOUR FORMER HIGHNESS!
WASN'T THERE ANOTHER HOMAGE FOR ME ON THE AGENDA?
SNAP! SNAP!
ER...
...OUR WONDERFUL AND MALEVOLENT NEW OVERLORD HAS GRACIOUSLY ALLOWED US TO PRESENT HIM WITH...
...THIS TRIBUTE FROM THE PLANETS LYNX, PANTHER AND TIGER!
RELEASE THE PRINCESSES!!
IT'S A GOOD START...
I GUESS!

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ALL RIGHT CHUMPS!
I'LL BE BACK FOR THE BARBECUE TONIGHT. TRY NOT TO GET OVERTHROWN WHILE I'M GONE!
MY LORD!
I CAN WAIT NO LONGER!!!
EH... DO WHAT YOU GOTTA DO, BABE.
mhmmm... ...love the stripes, honey...
MMZZTNNS...

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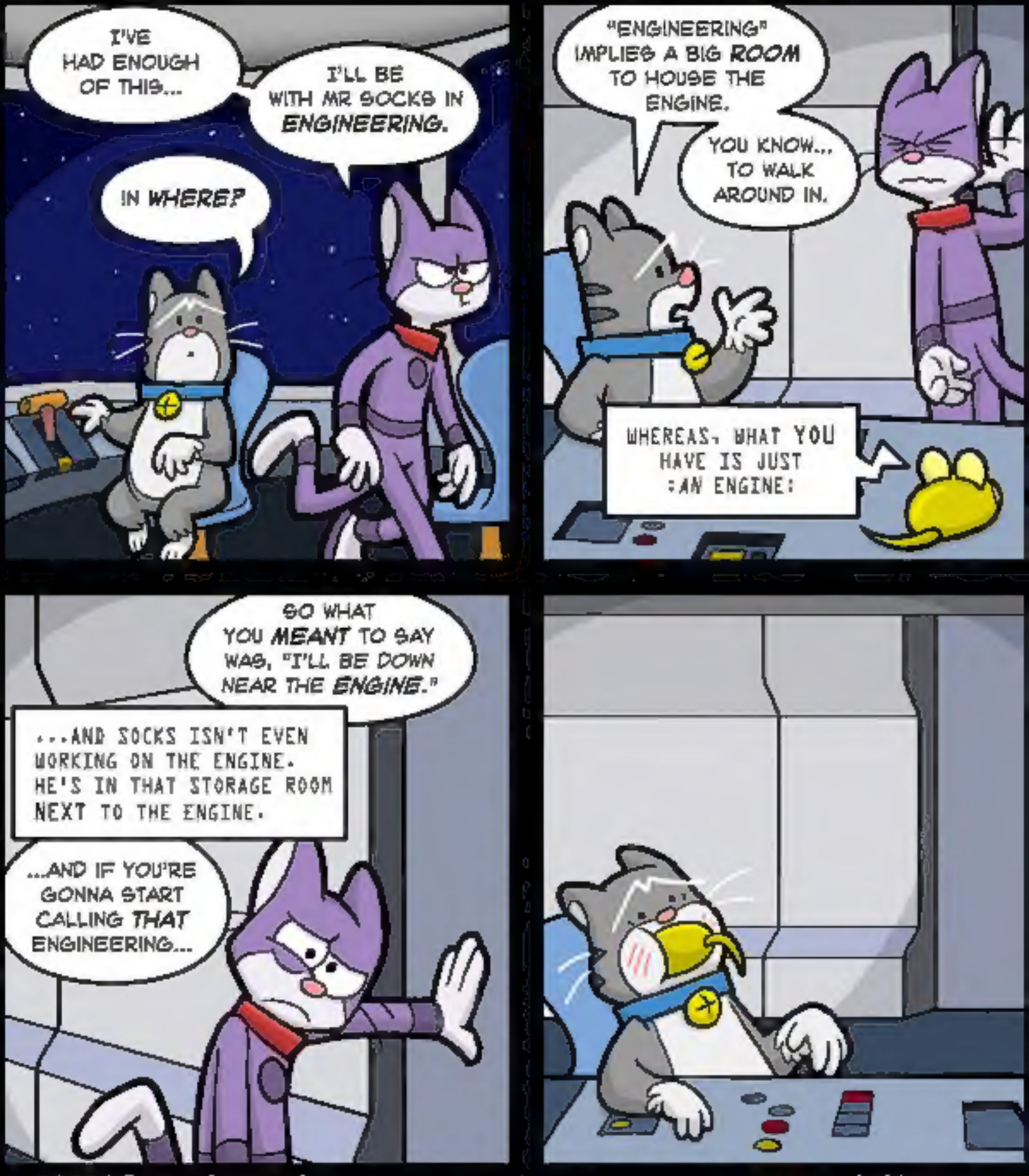
I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF THIS...
I'LL BE WITH MR SOCKS IN ENGINEERING.
IN WHERE?
"ENGINEERING" IMPLIES A BIG ROOM TO HOUSE THE ENGINE.
YOU KNOW... TO WALK AROUND IN.
WHEREAS, WHAT YOU HAVE IS JUST :AN ENGINE:
SO WHAT YOU MEANT TO SAY WAS, "I'LL BE DOWN NEAR THE ENGINE."
...AND SOCKS ISN'T EVEN WORKING ON THE ENGINE. HE'S IN THAT STORAGE ROOM NEXT TO THE ENGINE.
...AND IF YOU'RE GONNA START CALLING THAT ENGINEERING...

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SOCKS!
THAT TRANSPORTER HAD BETTER BE FIXED, FOR YOUR SAKE!
IF I'M NOT...
...OH I DUNNO...
...FLOATING IN SPACE WITHIN FIVE SECONDS, I'M COMING IN THERE WITH A ...
NO WAIT! I DIDN'T MEAN THA---
SOCKS...
THAT TRANSPORTER HAD BETTER BE BROKEN, FOR YOUR SAKE.

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THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH THAT THING THAT A FEW WEEKS OF MR SOCKS' HARD WORK WON'T FIX.
YOU AND YOUR WEB AUCTIONS...
WHY DID YOU GET THAT PIECE OF SPACE JUNK?
THIS IS JUST A COMMON TRANSPORTER ACCIDENT.
COMMON ON THIS SHIP, ANYWAY.
YOU KEPT BIDDING AND BIDDING ON THIS WORTHLESS MACHINE UNTIL YOU COULD HAVE BOUGHT A NEW ONE WITH ALL THAT SPACE MONEY!
IT'S A MATTER OF PRINCIPLES!
NO ONE MAKES A FOOL OF COMMANDER KITTY!
NO ONE HAS TO TRY VERY HARD.

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SERVES YOU RIGHT.
I TOLD YOU THAT THING WASN'T COMPATIBLE WITH MY SYSTEMS
KRIK!
I HAVE COMPLETE CONFIDENCE IN MR SOCKS' TECHNICAL KNOW-HOW, MOUSE.
HE MAY TALK LIKE A BABBLING BOOB, BUT HE'S A SCIENTIFIC GENIUS.
HIS COMPETITION IS NOT VERY STIFF ON THIS SHIP.
TSK.
THERE IT IS.
OH. VERY NICE.
I MADE AN ANDROID!

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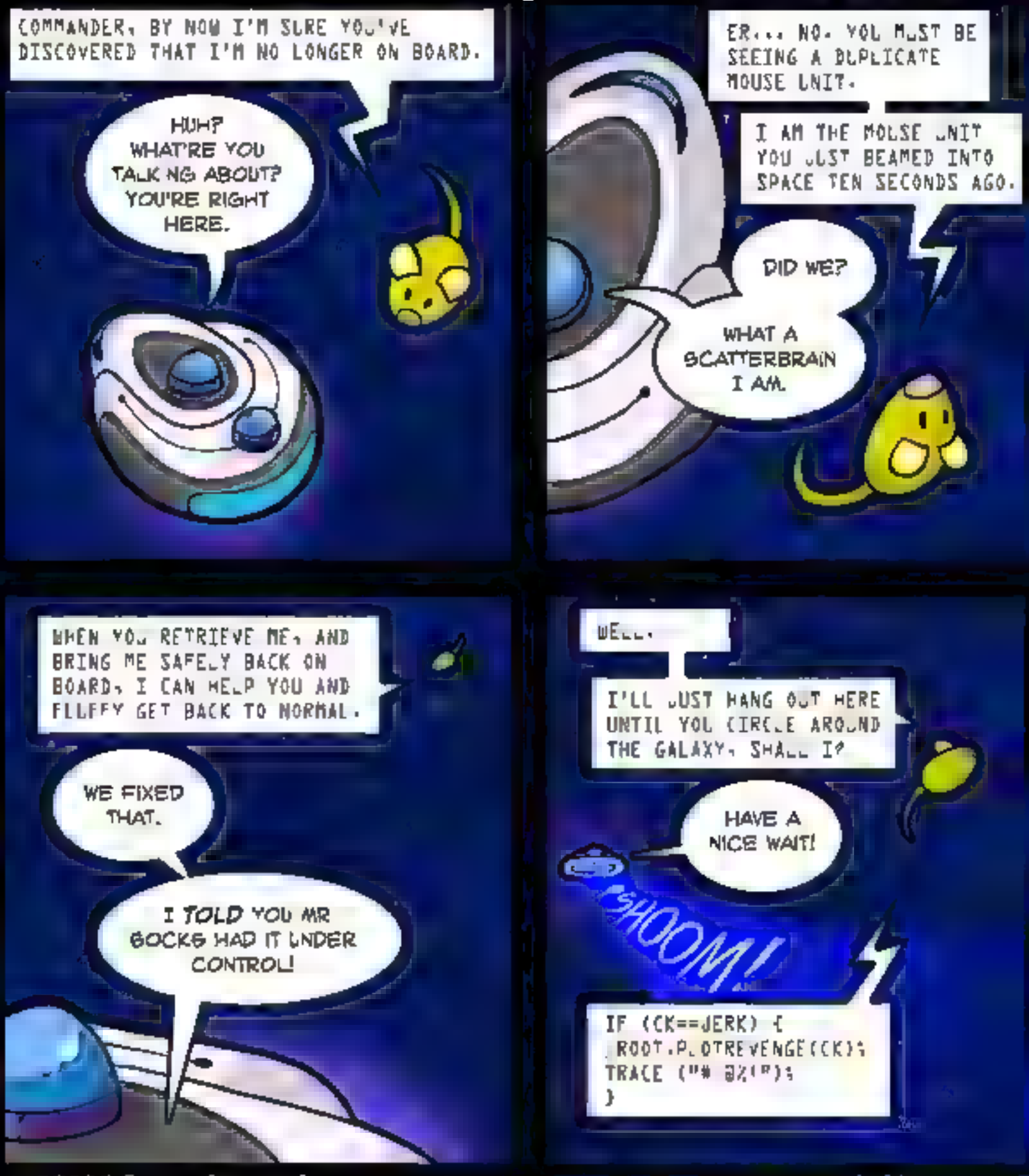
COMMANDER, BY NOW I'M SURE YOU'VE DISCOVERED THAT I'M NO LONGER ON BOARD.
HUH? WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT? YOU'RE RIGHT HERE.
ER... NO. YOU MUST BE SEEING A DUPLICATE MOUSE UNIT.
I AM THE MOUSE UNIT YOU JUST BEAMED INTO SPACE TEN SECONDS AGO.
DID WE?
WHAT A SCATTERBRAIN I AM.
WHEN YOU RETRIEVE ME, AND BRING ME SAFELY BACK ON BOARD, I CAN HELP YOU AND FLUFFY GET BACK TO NORMAL.
WE FIXED THAT.
I TOLD YOU MR SOCKS HAD IT UNDER CONTROL!
WELL.
I'LL JUST HANG OUT HERE UNTIL YOU CIRCLE AROUND THE GALAXY. SHALL I?
HAVE A NICE WAIT!
SHOOM!
IF (CK==JERK) {
ROOT.PLOTREVENGE(CK);
TRACE ("# @%(P);
}

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MEANWHILE, AT A POSH HOTEL ACROSS THE GALAXY...
...A GANG OF ROGUE SPACERS WAS GETTING THEIR PLAN IN MOTION
...STOPPING AT NOTHING TO PULL OFF THEIR OUTLAWED UNDERTAKING.
I'LL TAKE THE STAIRS.
I'LL CHIP MY ANTLERS IN THERE.
THE GAME IS ON, MOOSE! YER GONNA GET IN HERE 'FORE I BREAK 'M OFF AND SHOVE 'EM —
OKAY, OKAY.
CALM DOWN, GROOTLY.
IS IT A LONG RIDE, ANTS?
ER... ROOM 496.
TSK... I COULD WALK FOUR FLOORS FASTER THAN THIS TH NG.
THAT'S ON THE FOUR HUNDREDTH FLOOR, MOOSE.
YOU JUST CAN'T GET AWAY FROM ME. CAN YOU LEFTY?
...CAN'T GET AWAY FROM YOUR BREATH.
I HOPE THAT'S HIS BREATH.

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OKAY, GUYS. LET'S GO OVER THE PLAN ONCE MORE...
MOOSE, YOU WAIT N THE HALL AND KEEP WATCH.
ME, ANTS AND LEFTY WILL BE INSIDE...
?
HALLWAY
...AND WE'LL DISCUSS OUR FUTURE PLANS WITH OUR GUESTS.
ANY QUESTIONS?
WHAT IF THEY DOUBLE-CROSS US, AND TURN US IN TO THE I.I.I.?
THERE'S NO ROOM IN THIS GROUP FOR NEGATIVE THINKING, ANTS.
OR ANYTHING ELSE!

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GEEZ, HOW MUCH LONGER ANTS?
OW!!
KLONK!
COUPLE HUNDRED FLOORS OR SO
HEY, WATCH IT!
ME WATCH IT? YOU JUST TOTALLY HIT ME ON THE HEAD!
I JUST GOT THEM POLISHED, AND I DON'T WANT THEM CRACKED BEFORE THE CONTEST NEXT MONTH.
YOU WHAT?
YOU'RE IN AN ANTLER PAGEANT?
IT'S NOT A "PAGEANT", IT'S A CONTEST.
...DO YOU PUT A LITTLE SWIMSUIT ON ONE AND AN EVENING GOWN ON THE OTHER?
IT'S A CONTEST!
WHILE STRUMMING A UKULELE?
ON A UNICYCLE?

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LAUGH IT UP, BUT I PLAN ON WINN NG MY FIFTH STRAIGHT PAGEA-- CONTEST!
BIG DEAL!
WIN ALL THE CONTESTS YOU WANT - YOU'RE STILL A PETTY, FELONIOUS SUB-SPACER.
...BARELY A STEP UP FROM BEING A COMPLETE NUMPF.
SAY WHAT YOU WANT, . WE'RE IN TH S JOB TOGETHER, Y'KNOW
THAT'S EXACTLY MY POINT! YOU'RE NO BETTER THAN ME
HEH. KEEP TELL NG YOURSELF THAT BUT REMEMBER
MY ANTLERS MAY FALL OFF ONCE A YEAR...
BUT THEY'LL GROW BACK.
LEFTY.
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LEFTY
OKAY, GROUP. CALM AND STEADY NO FAST MOVES.
FIRST VENTURE WITH A NEW CLIENT.. LET'S KEEP IT BUSINESSLIKE IN THERE.
THAT BEING SAID..
LET'S STAY PREPARED FOR...
...ANYTHING?
OH, HI!
YOU MUST BE THOSE SMUGGLERS, YEAH?
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(...LIKE WE PLANNED, MOOSE.. WAIT FOR US OUTSIDE.)

OH, NO!

WE *MUST* MEET YOUR *MOOSE* FRIEND!

PLEASE! EVERYONE *COME IN!*

OH... HANG ON.. ONE SEC. ..

EVERYONE *EXCEPT* THE RED PANDA.

WELP... TOUGH BREAK FOR ME SEE YA, GROOTLY.

HANG ON, LEFTY!

WHY NOT HER?

GROOTLY, THIS *KID* PROBABLY WANTS US TO LIFT A BOOTLEG "STARMADILLO" ACTION FIGURE FOR HIS COLLECTION OR SOMETHING.

I sense

imperfection

from the female

"IMPER-*WHAT* FROM THE *WHOM*" NOW?

MY *NAME* IS *NIN WAH!!*

JUST *WHO* THE HECK ARE *YOU??*

I am Perfection

and what's *more*

I am the one holding THE Leash

Shall I invite them ns de to *discuss* the matter?

WELL IT WAS *GREAT* TO MEET YOU!

MIGG— "LEFTY" WAS IT?

...SORRY YOU'RE *IMPERFECT!*

BYE BYE!

TWICH

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I'M TELLING YOU, OFFICER! THERE ARE SOME KIND OF MONSTERS IN THAT ROOM, RIGHT NOW!!
OKAY, OKAY... STAND BACK, PEOPLE
EGADS!
WHAT A FANTASTIC VIEW!
I'LL HAVE TO TELL THE MISSUS ABOUT THIS PLACE!
GET MOVING, SPACER SCUM!
GYAAHH!!!

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HANG ON... HANG ON...
JUST LEMME CLEAR THIS JUNK OUTTA THE--
--OH. ACE.
IT'S JUST YOU.
WHAT, IS THERE A "GALAXY'S BIGGEST SHOW-OFF" CONTEST IN THIS SECTOR?
NOW NOW, CK. I SAW YOU ON THE SCANNERS AND THOUGHT I'D SAY HELLO!
SO HOW ARE THINGS ON THAT CRAZY SHIP OF YOURS?
I'LL BET YOU'RE KEEPING BUSY, EH?
INCREDIBLY BUSY, THANK YOU, ACE.
I PRINTED THE LABEL, COMMANDER.
NOT NOW, CREWMAN. I'M INCREDIBLY BUSY.
DID YOU WANT TO PRESS THE CUT BUTTON?
BUSINESS AS USUAL, EH, CK?

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HELLO, CAPTAIN ACE SIR!
REMEMBER ME?
FLUFFY! MITTENS!
HOW'S IT GOIN', YOU RASCALS?
MM.. IT'S GOING GOOD, CAPTAIN!
MY PILOT, MORRIS WANTED TO SAY HI.
LONG TIME NO SEE, CK!
...AND YOU REMEMBER MY FIRST OFFICER, FREEDA.
OH!
HEY, CK!
WOW, I FORGOT ABOUT THAT SUIT!
OOH. THEY HAVE PATCHES.
DID YOU SEE THAT COMMANDER?
THOSE ARE SOME MIGHTY FINE LOOKING PATCHES

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YEAH, WELL I'D LOVE TO STICK AROUND AND CATCH UP ON THINGS, ACE...
BUT I'VE GOT TO HELP MY ENGINEER INSTALL MY NEW...
...TRANSPORTER!
WELL, YOU MUST BE DOING ALL RIGHT IF YOU CAN AFFORD A LICENSE FOR ONE OF THOSE!
A TRANSPORTER? ...IS THAT SO?
LICENSE?!?
CK?
...WE LOST YOUR COMM SIGNAL THERE, CK.

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PICK UP CK!
I GOT A PROPOSITION FOR YOU AND YOUR TRANSPORTER!
COULD MAKE US BOTH A LOTTA SPACE BUCKS!
I'M ON MY WAY TO MEET SOME SHEEP KID ON GAZELLE. SAYS HE'S GOT A JOB ONLY THE GREATEST SPACER IN THE GALAXY CAN HANDLE.
AND IF I HAD A TRANSPORTER, WE COULD GET THIS JOB DONE TEN TIMES AS FAST, AND A HUNDRED TIMES MORE IMPRESSIVE!
...YOU COULD MAKE YOURSELF SOME REAL CONNECTIONS!
WHADDYA SAY WE TEAM UP FOR THIS ONE?
I SAY...
I WOULD SOONER EAT MY OWN --
PLOP!
YOU BET, ACE!!
DOOK! DOOK! DOOK!
...TAI...

WE'LL BE IN ORBIT OF GAZELLE IN FOUR HOURS. MEET US THERE!
WHAT?? COME IN, YOU OVERSTUFFED, NO TALENT, GINGER-BOTTOMED SPACE PHONY!
SIGNAL CLOSED
HATE...
ACE...
OKAY!
IF WE'RE GONNA DO THIS, WE'RE GONNA DO IT MY WAY!
MR SOCKS! YOU HAVE FOUR HOURS TO FIX THAT TRANSPORTER. HOP TO IT!
LT. MITTENS, SET COURSE FOR GAZELLE..
..AND DON'T SPARE THE WARPS!
AYE AYE!
FLUFFY, KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR THE TRIPLE I.
NOTIFY ME IF A PATROL GETS WITHIN 100 SPACE MILES!
SLOW LORIS!
EH... NO TIME NOW.

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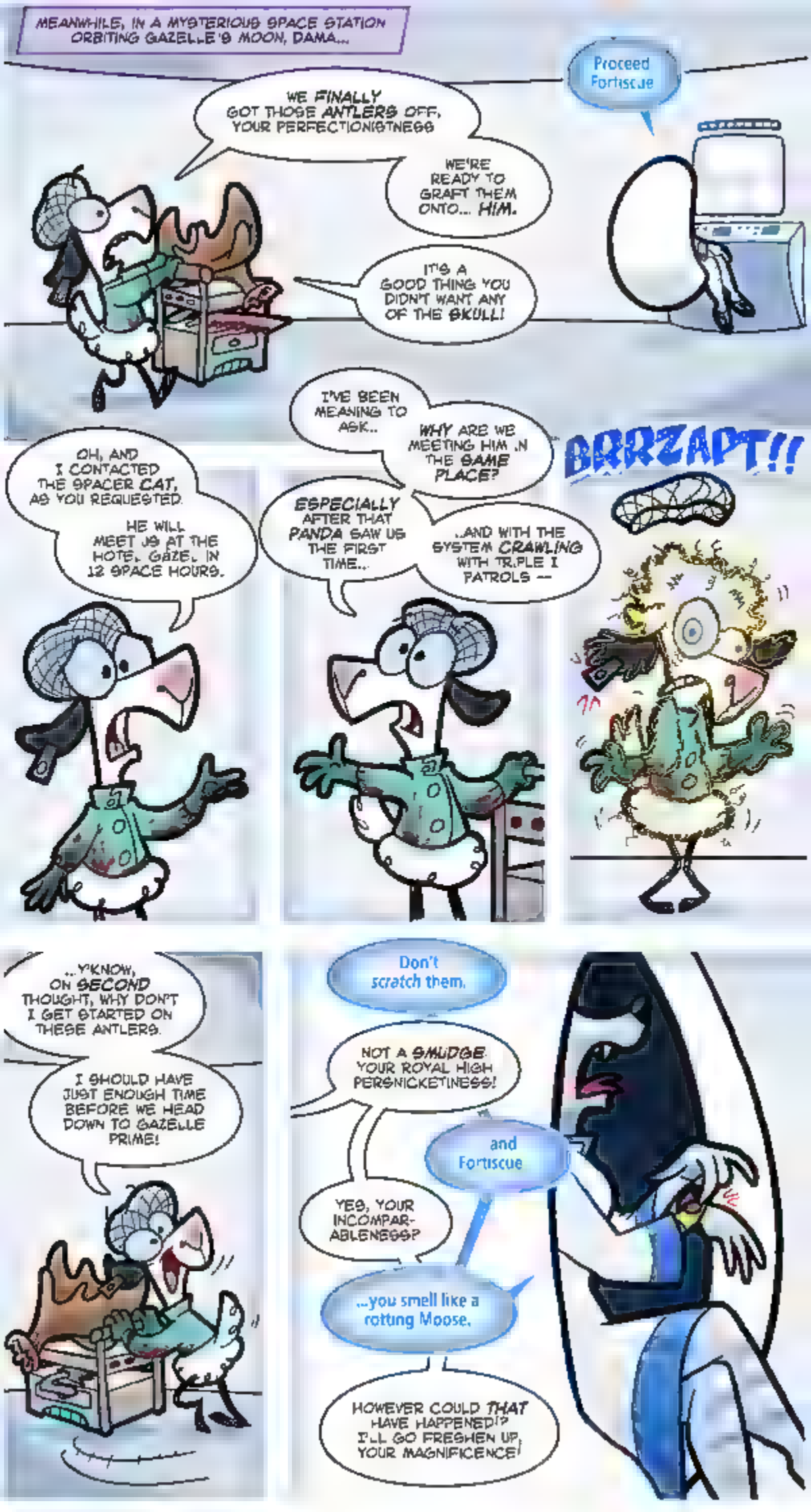
MEANWHILE, IN A MYSTERIOUS SPACE STATION ORBITING GAZELLE'S MOON, DAMA...
WE FINALLY GOT THOSE ANTLERS OFF, YOUR PERFECTIONISTNESS
WE'RE READY TO GRAFT THEM ONTO... HIM.
IT'S A GOOD THING YOU DIDN'T WANT ANY OF THE SKULL!
Proceed Fortiscue
I'VE BEEN MEANING TO ASK...
WHY ARE WE MEETING HIM IN THE SAME PLACE?
ESPECIALLY AFTER THAT PANDA SAW US THE FIRST TIME...
..AND WITH THE SYSTEM CRAWLING WITH TRIPLE I PATROLS --
OH, AND I CONTACTED THE SPACER CAT, AS YOU REQUESTED.
HE WILL MEET US AT THE HOTEL GAZEL IN 12 SPACE HOURS.
BRRZAPT!!
..Y'KNOW, ON SECOND THOUGHT, WHY DON'T I GET STARTED ON THESE ANTLERS.
I SHOULD HAVE JUST ENOUGH TIME BEFORE WE HEAD DOWN TO GAZELLE PRIME!
Don't scratch them.
NOT A SMUDGE YOUR ROYAL HIGH PERSNICKETINESS!
and Fortiscue
YES, YOUR INCOMPARABLENESS?
...you smell like a rotting Moose.
HOWEVER COULD THAT HAVE HAPPENED!? I'LL GO FRESHEN UP, YOUR MAGNIFICENCE!

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RECORDING... PRISONER NUMBER XP162844Q. NAME, NIN WAH... RED PANDA... BEGIN INVENTORY...
...ONE GREEN OVERCOAT
...ONE PAIR GREEN PANTS
...ONE YELLOW SHIRT
...ONE PAIR BOOTS
...ONE PINK HEADBAND OH, VERY CUTE.
...ONE WALLET, FOURTEEN SPACE DOLLARS.
...ONE COMB.
...ONE SPACE PHONE.
...ONE PACK, "BAMBOOLICIOUS" CHEWY GUM.
ONE...
ARM...
YEH, COULD I PLEASE HAVE THAT BACK, PLEASE?
THIS PROSTHETIC WILL BE ANALYZED FOR MALICIOUS ACCESSORIES.
IN THE MEANTIME, YOU HAVE BEEN PROVIDED WITH A STANDARD REPLACEMENT
WELL, IN THAT CASE...
I WANT TO FILE A COMPLAINT.
TALK TO YOUR LAWYER.

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MEANWHILE, ABOARD A DETENTION SATELLITE ORBITING GAZELLE...
FWA-SHOOOM!!!
YOU WHAT??
RATHER THAN EXPOSE OUR COMPUTERS TO ANY POSSIBLE VIRUS, WE ELECTED TO SHUNT YOUR PROSTHETIC INTO SPACE.
SO.. YOU DIDN'T EVEN TEST IT?!
TO DO SO WOULD PUT OUR SYSTEMS AT RISK.
...BETTER SAFE THAN SORRY!
YOU PEOPLE CAN'T BE THAT STUPID
OH COME ON NOW.
DON'T BE GLUM.
YOU HAVEN'T TOUCHED YOUR CORN ON THE COB!
...PASS THE SALT?

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NEXT ON THE DOCKET A YOUNG RED PANDA CAPTURED IN ASSOCIATION WITH AN UNPAID HOTEL BILL COULD VERY WELL BE...
A KILLER!
APPREHENDED IN POSSESION OF THIS DIABOLICAL CYBERTRONIC APPENDAGE OF DESTRUCTION...
ARTIST'S RENDERING
ARM E DEATH
AMONG HER DEVIOUS PLOTS JUST MAY HAVE BEEN...
WORLDWIDE DEVISTATION!!!
BITS OF PLANET
BOOOM
ARTIST'S RENDERING
TODAY WE WILL DIVE DEEP INTO THE MIND OF THIS SINISTER CYBORG THIS PSYCHOTIC SPACER. THIS PATHA-LOGICAL PANDA. .
FLAPPA
FLAPPA
ARCHIVE FOOTAGE
..AFTER THESE WORDS FROM SHAKE-A-PUDDING!
YOU SAID THE VIDEO WAS JUST FOR COURT RECORDS, RIGHT?
YALMPH.

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NIN WAH, YOU STAND ACCUSED OF BEING AN ACCOMPLICE IN THE DISAPPEARANCE OF YOUR THREE SPACER CREWMATES,
FAILURE TO PAY FOR VERY EXPENSIVE HOTEL SERVICES,
...AND ILLEGAL POSSESSION OF A POSSIBLY DANGEROUS CYBERTRONIC ARM.
THIS COURT FINDS YOU GUILTY!
YOU ARE [redacted] SENTENCED TO FIFTEEN MINUTES OF COMMUNITY SERVICE.
COURT ADJOURNED!
CLONK!
FIFTEEN MINUTES? WOW! YOU'RE THE BEST STATE APPOINTED MOUTHPIECE EVER!
I THOUGHT FOR SURE I WAS GONNA GET—
--IN UM...
REALLY BIG...
THIS WAY PLEASE
...TROUBLE
...IF YOU COULD WRITE A CHECK BEFORE YOU LEAVE?
...HALF OFF, OK?
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/SO VAST
/ENDLESS

/THERE HAS TO BE A
/REASON FOR THE
/UNIVERSE TO EXIST

MAYBE ALL THIS FREE
TIME WILL HELP ME
CONTEMPLATE THE
MEANING OF IT ALL

/PERHAPS WHEN I M
FOUND _ AN PASS
/ON MY UNDERSTANDING
/ TO OTHERS

CREATE NEW DATABASE();
VAR BEGINNING=NEW ARRAY();

SNAG!

/WHOA

/BEST NOT TO ASK
/I GUESS

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YOU SEE..
BUDGET CUTBACKS HAVE FORCED US TO ISSUE SHORTER SENTENCES TO REDUCE PRISONER HOUSING COSTS.
YOUR DUTY IS TO PICK UP TRASH AROUND THE STATION.
AFTER FIFTEEN MINUTES, YOU'RE A FREE PANDA.
WE HOPE THAT YOU WILL NOT RETURN AFTER THIS.
UN CUFF
YOU ALL PLAN ON WATCHING ME WORK?
YEH! WITH ALL THE MONEY WE SAVED, WE CAN THROW THIS SWELL PARTY!

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WELL, HERE WE ARE! HOPE YOU'RE READY TO START!
?
THIS AIRLOCK DOESN'T LOOK THAT DIRTY
OH NOT IN HERE...
...OUT THERE.
FLIP
FLIP
WHEN I SAID "AROUND THE STATION", I MEANT AROUND THE STATION.
WHAT?!
DON'T I GET A SPACESUIT?!?
SORRY... CUTBACKS, YOU KNOW.
WHILE YOU'RE OUT THERE, YOU CAN START CLEANING UP THE LAST PRISONER.

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COMING UP ON MYTHOYSTERS!
CAN SIMPLE BUBBLE WRAP PROTECT YOU FROM A HUNGRY OTTER?
FIND OUT, AFTER THIS!
We know life isn't Perfect
Now you can know what we know
MITTENS?
MITTENS! YOU BETTER NOT BE WATCHING "MYTHOYSTERS" ON THE MAIN MONITOR!
NO, COMMANDER...
I swear can #Mittens go five minutes without being distracted by something?

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I DON'T BELIEVE IT!
FOUR HOURS I GAVE YOU TO BUILD ME A TRANSPORTER ROOM...
...AND YOU'RE STILL LOOKING THROUGH WALLPAPER SWATCHES!

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YOU CALLED FOR ME, COMMANDER?
MYTHOYSTERS, MITTENS...
LET'S TALK ABOUT MYTHOYSTERS...
I PROMISE COMMANDER, I WASN'T --
OH BELAY THAT LIEUTENANT!
WOULDN'T YOU LIKE TO TAKE PART IN AN EXPERIMENT OF YOUR OWN? JUST LIKE THOSE GUYS?
IN FACT, YOU CAN HELP US OUT RIGHT NOW!
C'MON, MITTENS...
...FOR SCIENCE!
DOOK! DOOK! DOOK!
GULP!
SHOCKWATCH STICKERS?
YEAH. JUST LET US KNOW WHICH ONES GO OFF WHEN YOU ARRIVE AT... WHEREVER IT IS THE HECK YOU'RE GOING.

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OKAY, MITTENS!

...THIS IS "EXPERIMENTAL TRANSPORTER RIG WITH LIVE TEST SUBJECT"...

READY HIGH SPEED!

EVERYONE, I BELIEVE YOU ALL KNOW MY NEW ASSISTANT FRANK.

TO CELEBRATE HIS PROMOTION LAST WEEK, HE'LL HAVE THE HONOR OF SENDING THIS ONE OFF.

...N THREE!

THUMP! THUMP! THUMP! THUMP! THUMP!

THEY DO SCREAM AND FUSS A BIT.

BUT NOT FOR LONG.

TWO!

EVERYONE READY?

ONE! TRANSPORTERIZE!!

PUSH THE BUTTON, FRANK!

FUH-WOOSH

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KLONNG!!
!CHOP!
...AND
OUCH!!
MR SOCKS.
YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO TRANSPORT THE SUBJECT.
NOT THE TRANSPORTER ITSELF.
HBLRUBHLRHB!
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DOOK! DOOK
HBRLBHLRUH
DOOK DOOK DO
DOOK DO
IT'S NOT THE MACHINE'S FAULT, SOCKS. THAT BEAMER HAD AN A++++++++++ RATING!
THAT'S TEN PLUSSES, SOCKS!!
BAP!
MITTENS, WE'VE GOT TO RETRIEVE THAT TRANSPORTER CAPSULE
LOOK FOR IT ON LONG-RANGE SENSORS, AND ADJUST COURSE TO INTERCEPT
CAN YOU AT LEAST DO THAT?
OKAY, FLUFFY SPECULATE.
HOW CAN WE FOOL ACE AND HIS CREW THAT WE HAVE A FUNCTIONAL TRANSPORTER?
RIGHT...
LET'S KEEP THAT PLAN ON THE BACKBURNER.
WOOOOO... WHERE DID YOU GO??

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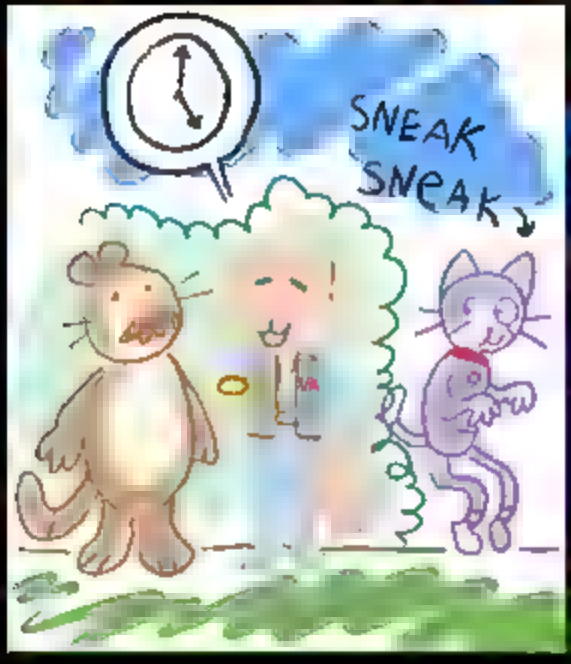

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KLONK!
OH FOR CRYIN' OUT--
WHAT NOW?
SOMETHING SMACKED INTO THE SHIP.
KACHUNK
RATTA RATTA RATT
TARRAKA KLANK!
NOW IT'S IN THE VENTS!
TSK. IF IT'S NOT ONE THING..
MITTENS!
I L-L-LOCATED THE T-T-TRANSPORTER CAPSULE. C-C-COMMANDER...
GREAT.
TELL MR SOCKS TO LOAD IT INTO THE CARGO BAY.
AFTER THAT, FIND OUT WHAT'S CLOGGING THE VENTS.
D-D-DO I HAVE TO?
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MERRY CHRISTMAS!
I'M IN UR STOCKING
HANGING WITH CARE
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GAH!!
SPACE ZOMBIES!!!
DIVERT ALL POWER TO SHIELDS!
HEAD FOR THE SPACE HILLS!
I'LL BE IN MY READY ROO--
FLUFFY, WHY DID YOU PUT A LEASH ON AN EGGPLANT?
I COULDN'T FIND ANY TURNIPS!

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GHLEUGH!

AM COMPLETELY GONNA PUKE IF I HAVEN'T ALREADY.

HANG ON, SOCKS! THERE'S TOO MANY WEIRD THINGS GOIN' ON HERE.

I WANT A LEVEL ONE FORCE FIELD AROUND THAT THING BEFORE WE OPEN IT.

OKAY, K.D. THIS IS YOUR LAST STAND. DON'T LET'M TAKE YOU WITHOUT A FIGHT!!

OKAY.. NOW. OPEN IT UP!

RYAAAAGGGGH!!

!

KER BONG!

NICE FORCE FIELD.

WELL, I GUESS YOU CAN GET A SECOND CHANCE TO MAKE A FIRST IMPRESSION.

OR VICE VERSA?

OH HEY. WHERE THE HECK HAVE YOU BEEN?

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iTri
WAIT A MINUTE, SOCKS. THIS IS NO SPACE ZOMBIE!
THAT CYBER ARM ON THE BRIDGE MUST BE HERS.
HER NAME IS N N WAH. . SHE'S FROM PANDA RED SHE WAS ARRESTED YESTERDAY ON GAZELLE..
ACCORDING TO MY iTri,
WHOA. LISTEN TO THIS RAP SHEET, SOCKS!
VANDALISM... SMUGGLING. KIDNAPPING ..
ILLEGAL POSSESSION OF DEADLY WEAPONS...
..ATTEMPTING TO BLOW UP PLANET GAZELLE!
SHE MUST BE A BIGGER SPACER THAN ACE!!
...AND WE RESCUED HER!
DOOK DOOK?
NO, IT DOESN'T KNOW HER FAVOR TE COLOR.
THAT'S A FEATURE IN THE PAID APP.

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DONTCHA SEE, MR SOCKS??
I JUST RESCUED THE HOTTEST, MOST UP-AND-COMINGEST SPACER IN THE GALAXY!
WITH HER N MY CREW, I'LL BE RIGHT UP THERE WITH THE BIG BOYS!
JUST IMAGINE THE EXCITEMENT! ...THE ADVENTURE!
THE GIFT-WRAPPED LYNX PRINCESSES!
WHY, SHE JUST ESCAPED FROM PRISON!
THE TRIPLE-I ARE PROBABLY AFTER HER RIGHT NOW!
KER BOOM
YAAAAAHH!!!
THE TRIPLE-I ARE AFTER US!! YAAGGHH!!

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ATTENTION, SPACER VESSEL!
THIS IS THE INVESTIGATIVE INTERSTELLAR INSTITUTE
ER. I MEAN "INTERSTELLAR INVESTIGATIVE INSTITUTE".
YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN..
WE HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE YOU ARE HARBORING AN ESCAPED CONVICT.
COME TO A COMPLETE STOP AND DROP YOUR SHIELDS.
OOWW MY CUTE LITTLE NOSE.
I DUNNO, SOCKS. MAYBE WE SHOULD PLAY IT SAFE.
MAYBE WE SHOULD HAND LEFTY HERE OVER TO THE TRIPLE-I AND BE ON OUR--
YOINK!
SPLAT!
CALL ME THAT AGAIN, AND WE'LL HAVE SOMETHING IN COMMON... GOT IT?!
Y-Y-YES MA'AM...
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...YOU WERE SAYING, PURPLE PANTS?!
MITTENS! OL' BUDDY OL' PAL!
DO US A FAVOR AND FETCH THAT ROBOT ARM AND GIVE IT TO THIS LUNATIC!
IT'S TOO LATE..!! IT'S AFTER ME!!
M-MY ARM? IT'S HERE?
BUT HOW--?
YOU COULD SAY IT STUCK OUT ITS THUMB AND HITCHED A RIDE
IT'S COMING! IT'S GONNA ASSIMILATE US ALL
YEAH, LISTEN, IF I COULD JUST--
WHOOF!
HBLRUBH LBHLRUBL DOOK DOOK!
IT'S TOO HORRIBLE!
YOU CAN SAY THAT AGAIN!
I'M A ROBOT!
BEEP! BOOP!
BEEP!
KRAAK!

LISTEN, YOU RING TAILED MENACE! THE TRIPLE-I ARE GONNA BLAST US TO PIECES UNLESS WE--
DO ME A FAVOR...
HOLD THIS A SEC!
WHOOP!
SHLORFT!
WOULD YOU PLEASE GO BACK TO BE NG UNCONSCIOUS, SO I CAN HAND YOU OVER TO THE--
FINALLY!
WHAAUGH! LITTLE BABY MONSTERS ALL OVER THE PLACE!
KLAK!
OOOH... SHINY BUTTONS...
EEWWWW... SHE ALL GLOBBERED IN MY HAND
BLINK
WHRR
...NOW WHAT DID YOU WANT?
YAAGGHH!! THE TRIPLE-I IS AFTER US!
KER BOOM!
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SIR, PRISONER NUMBER XP162844Q IS REPORTED RESCUED, AND ABOARD A SPACER SHIP ORBITTING GAZELLE
HUH?
..YOU MEAN ALIVE?
YES, SIR. I HAVE FOUR DRONE SHIPS AT THE POINT, SURROUNDING THE SPACER SHIP
DID YOU FIRE A WARNING SHOT?
YES, SIR.
UM... DID YOU FIRE ANOTHER WARNING SHOT?
YES, SIR.
REALLY!
HMM!
WELL, AS LONG AS THEY DON'T DO ANYTHING STUPID, LET HER GO.
WE DON'T HAVE THE BUDGET FOR IT ANYWAY
AYE, SIR
YOU HEARD ME, MITTENS.
...EVERY SINGLE .. TORPEDO.
...OR I LOAD YOU INTO THE BIG GUN!
!?

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HEY YOU! WAIT!
WHAT THE HECK IS GOING ON?
THERE'S ONLY LIKE A WHOLE FLEET OF TRIPLE-I SHIPS OUT THERE, LADY!
CLANK! KLNK!
LISTEN! THEY'RE ONLY AFTER ME!
WE SHOULD TRY OUT RUNNING THEM. YOU CAN'T FIRE ON THE III!
CAN'T STOP TO CHAT!
THE COMMANDER GOES A LITTLE CRAZY WHEN HIS BACK'S AGAINST THE WALL
A LITTLE CRAZY?
YOU GET USED TO IT!
THIS IS COMPLETELY INSANE!
SO IS "huff" PUTTING THE ARMORY "wheeze" FIVE DECKS AWAY FROM "koff" THE BIG GUN!

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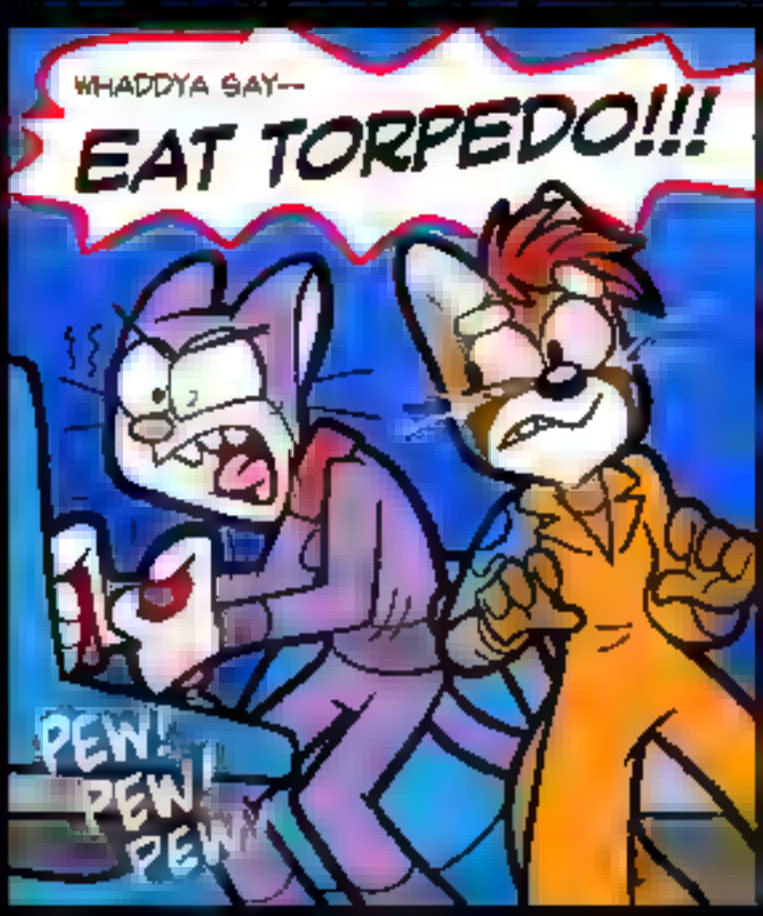
WHAT KIND OF SPACER ARE YOU?
YOU CAN'T JUST OPEN FIRE ON THE TRIPLE-I!
OH COME ON! WE'RE ALWAYS IN A SCRAPE WITH THOSE GUYS!
WE KNOW HOW TO HANDLE THEM!



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HEY THAT'S GREAT!
KEEP IT UP THERE!
I'M JUST GONNA GO.. FIND THE LITTLE PANDA'S ROOM..
PYOO! PYOO!
PYOO!
BE RIGHT BACK!
THIS SHIP MUST HAVE AN ESCAPE POD OR SOMETHING!
MUSN'T ATTRACT ANY...
DOOK!
...ATTENTION!
HEY! JELLY BELLY! I REMEMBER YOU! UM... THANKS FOR THE FIRST AID AN' ALL, BUT I'M ALL BETTER NOW, GOTTA-GO-BYE!
HBRL BLR BJHBLR'
NHURRF!!
DOOK!
HBRLB
HE'S ABOUT THE EASIEST ONE TO UNDERSTAND ON THIS SHIP!
HBLB RHLUH BRLUH

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YEAH, UH. LISTEN BIG GUY... I'M A LITTLE BUSY NOW. I'VE GOTTA GET OFF THIS SHIP!
MAYBE THE TRIPLE-I WILL GO EASY ON ME IF I TURN MYSELF OVER.
...KNOW WHAT I MEAN!?
DOOK
DOOK DOOK IT IS THEN:
DOOK DOOK!
?
...YOU FIXED YOUR TRANSPORTER ALREADY?
DOOK! DOOK!
LHBLRU BLRHB LHBLR!
YOU'D REALLY TRANSPORTERIZE ME OVER TO ONE OF THEIR SHIPS?
NUH-UH, MR SOCKS!
COMMANDER SAID NO ONE'S S'POSED T' USE THE TRANSPORTER UNTIL HE SAYS IT'S OKAY!
AND BESIDES... SHE'S SUPPOSED TO... UM...
STAY HERE...
UNTIL...
ULP!
MITTENS!
WHAT HAVE I TOLD YOU?
YOU'RE GETTING GLOBBER ALL OVER MY NICE CLEAN TORPEDOS!
HURRF FRRUHH GHHURF!
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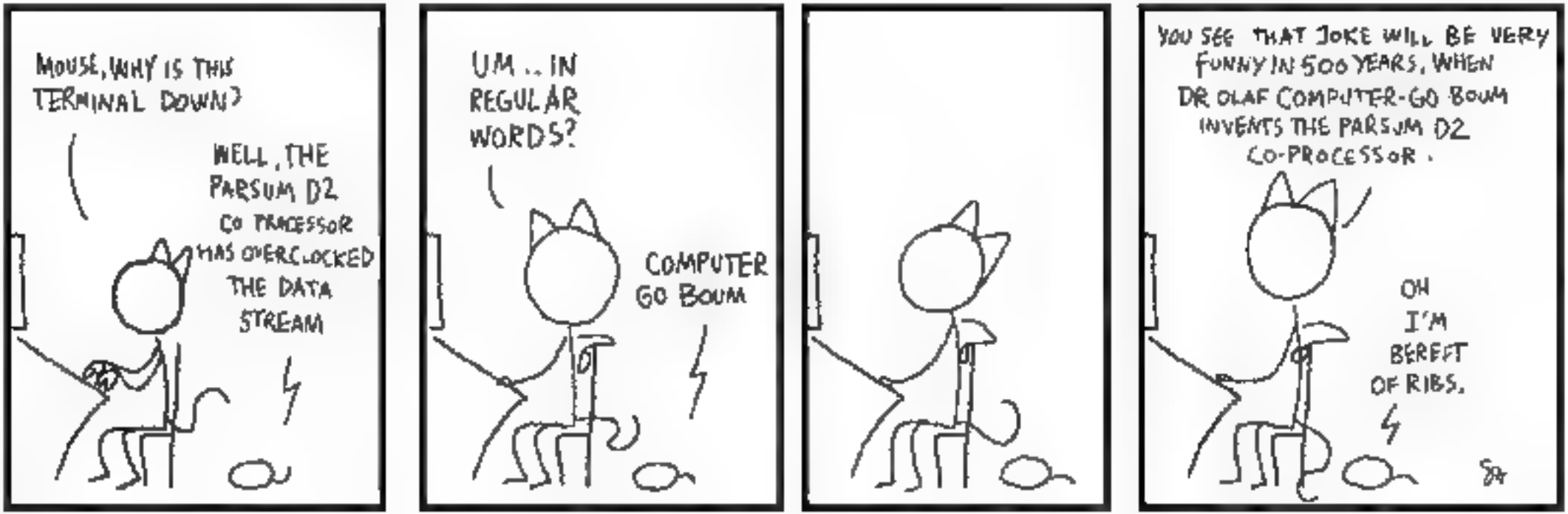
MOUSE, WHY IS THIS TERMINAL DOWN?
WELL, THE PARSUM D2 CO PROCESSOR HAS OVERCLOCKED THE DATA STREAM
UM .. IN REGULAR WORDS?
COMPUTER GO BOUM
YOU SEE THAT JOKE WILL BE VERY FUNNY IN 500 YEARS, WHEN DR OLAF COMPUTER-GO BOUM INVENTS THE PARSUM D2 CO-PROCESSOR.
OH I'M BEREFT OF RIBS.
SA

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C'MON, MITTENS. HOP TO! HOP TO!

THESE SHIPS AIN'T GONNA KILL THEMSELVES!

LAST... *SNIFF* *SNIFF* TORPEDO...

*POP POP

AW DARN. REMIND ME TO STOP BY WAR*MART TOMORROW AND PICK UP A FEW DOZEN MORE.

JUST IN TIME SOCKS!

WATCH ME POP THIS LAST ONE!

PYOO!

YAAHHH!

VWIP!

KAPOW!

PLANET GAZELLE I.I.I. HEADQUARTERS

YOU HEAR SOMETHING?

EXHAUST PORT

SHOOM!

BOOHHH

POOPIE

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IF YOU'RE ALL DONE WITH TARGET PRACTICE, I'M MONITORING AN INTERESTING TRANSMISSION FROM PLANET GAZELLE.

MOUSE, YOU *BETTER* BE RECORDING THE UNCLE FLOYD SHOW BEHIND THIS!

HISSSS!

...WE TAKE YOU NOW TO A BRIEFING ABOUT THE TRIPLE-I FACILITY EXPLOSION IN ORBIT OF PLANET GAZELLE.

KEEF QUIMBLOPE - BREAKING

...FORTUNATELY, ALL PERSONNEL AND PRISONERS HAD *DISEMBARKED* THE STATION...

...CONDUCTING OUR QUARTER-CENTURIAL *FIRE DRILL* TO OUR *SISTER STATION* ON THE OPPOSITE SIDE OF GAZELLE.

A TIGHT BUDGET IS *NO EXCUSE* FOR IGNORING PROPER FIRE SAFETY PROCEDURES.

HOWEVER, SINCE MOST SURVEILLANCE VIDEOS WERE DESTROYED, WE HAVE NO LEADS ON THE *EXACT CAUSE* OF THE CATASTROPHE

LOOKS LIKE THE TRIPLE-I WILL BE *OCCUPIED* FOR A WHILE, YOUR SUPERLATIVENESS.

A very fortunate distraction, fortsque

Time to go some *TAGGING*

BRZZZT!

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HYEE HYEE HEEE!

I'm so close Fortescue! So close to the Perfection!

Status report!

PROJECT: PERFECT MALE

WELL, THOSE ANTLERS ARE ON.

THE TUSKS ARE FINALLY FIRMING UP

ALL PARTS ARE IN PLACE, AWAITING THE PERFECT BRAIN.

Perfect male brain you mean

MALE BRAIN, YES, YOUR SCRUTINIZINGNESS.

WHEN WE MEET ACE, THE SPACER CAPTAIN, WE GIVE HIM A COMPLIMENTARY iKnow...

...MY OWN BRILLIANT INVENTION!

LATER, WHEN WE ACTIVATE THE iKnow, WE CAN ANALYZE HIS BRAIN ACTIVITY TO CONFIRM THAT HE'S THE RIGHT SPECIMAN FOR PERFECT MALE.

THEN, WE SEND A HOMING IMPULSE TO HIS BRAIN, BRINGING HIM TO OUR PERFECT SANCTUARY WHERE WE MAKE THE SWAP!

THEN, THE PERFECT SPECIES CAN TAKE SHAPE!

?

IS SOMETHING WRONG, YOUR INQUISITIVENESS?

Why did we go with the Elephant last time?

...THE BUGS?

Alright, the better for stomping with.

Ewww.

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Antelopolis, Planet Gazelle

WELL, IF CK *DOES* STOP BY, TELL 'EM I SAID HI!

I'M GONNA GRAB SOME SUPPLIES IN TOWN.

WILL DO, MORRIS. STAY OUTTA TROUBLE!

WOW, THOSE *IKnow* THINGS ARE *EVERYWHERE* HERE.

I KNOW!

IT'S *CREEPY* IN A WAY LIKE SOME KIND OF *SECRET SOCIETY* OR SOMETHING.

HA!

THE ONLY SOCIETY A *SPACER* NEEDS IS A GOOD CREW!

PING!

Scanning, my Queen!

Target acquired, my Queen.

Target acquired, my Queen.

Target acquired, my Queen.

Target acquired, my Queen

Target acquired, my Queen

BLIP! ?!

YUP! LIFE IS *GOOD*!

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HEY SPACER! GET IN HERE BEFORE THE TRIPLE-I COME SNOOPING AROUND!

NIN WAH! COME JOIN THE PARTY!

PARTY!?

WHAT IN THE COLD, DARK GALAXY COULD YOU *POSSIBLY* BE *CELEBRATING?*

MR SOCKS, FETCH OUR NEW CREWMATE A *DIET TRANYA*, WOULD YOU?

CREWMATE? NOT ON YOUR *LIFE!*

I WANT NOTH NG TO DO WITH *YOU*, YOUR *PARTY*, OR YOUR *FREAKY SHIP!*

SHEESH! WHAT'S YANKING *YOUR* TAIL?

SHLURP!

YOU! YOU ALL ARE COMPLETE AND TOTAL *NUMPHS!*

FLUFFY? MITTENS? SOCKS?

THAT'S NOT A CREW ROSTER, IT'S A *LAUNDRY LIST!*

JUST SHOW ME WHERE I CAN CHANGE, AND I'M GETTING *OUT* OF HERE!

CHANGE?

CHANGE *CLOTHES.*

...WHICH BRINGS UP *ANOTHER* FREAKY THING ABOUT THIS SHIP!

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COME TO THINK OF IT, WHERE IS FLUFFY?

...WHAT DO YOU MEAN, 'DIET'?

SPACEOUTS

There once was a spacer named Fluffy.

Who looked like a little pink puff-y

She beat them til they had enough-y.

FLUFFY, WHAT THE HECK ARE YOU WEARING?

When horrible monsters.

Came sneaking up'at her...

KRAK!

FLUFFY WHAT HAVE I TOLD YOU ABOUT *POOL CUE SPACE PRINCESS?*

THAT'S RIGHT. NOW REPORT TO WHATEVER IT IS YOU DO HERE.

SHE DOESN'T EXIST?

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WHERE'S THE PANDA, LIEUTENANT BUTTERBALL?

SH-SHE'S INSIDE THAT MAINTENANCE CLOSET...

UM... UH... *CHANGING!*

SO *ANYWAY*, NIN WAH. I FIGURED YOU CAN COME MEET A FRIEND OF MINE WHO HAS A LITTLE PROJECT GOING ON.

HE NEEDS ME TO HELP HIM OUT... ...*AGAIN!*

AND LATER, WE CAN HANG OUT AND TELL SPACER STORIES.

HE'D *LOVE* TO HEAR ALL ABOUT YOUR FASCINATING CAREER, AND HOW YOU WOUND UP IN *MY* CREW!

THE ONLY THING I'M *WINDING* IS THIS CONVERSATION, *UP*.

HEY! YOU LOOK *FANTASTIC!* ALL READY TO DO SOME SERIOUS SPACERING!

WOOSH

HEY. INCOMING TRANSMISSION FROM ACE.

OH... OKAY FINE JUST A MINUTE.

ACE? ...AS IN *ACE* OF THE *VELVET KNIGHT?*

THAT'S YOUR FRIEND?

YEAH, WELL *YOU* KNOW HOW IT IS. I LET HIM *TAG ALONG* ON OUR ADVENTURES SOMETIMES.

WELL WHAT ARE WE WAITING FOR, CK! *LET'S GET SPACING!*

HEH...

HEH!

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COME ON, LET'S GO! WHICH WAY TO THAT TRANSPORTER, MR BOCKS?

OH, THE TRANSPORTER IS UP AGAIN? EXCELLENT WORK BOCKS!

DOOK!

I'M GLAD TO SEE YOU'RE BECOMING A TEAM PLAYER, YEOMAN WAH!

"YEOMAN?!?"

HEY WE'VE ALL GOT TO START SOMEWHERE, ME YOUNG BUCK! PRETTY SOON, YOU'LL BE GUNNING FOR MITTENS' J[redacted]!

THAT'S NOT ALL I'LL BE GUNNING FOR... "COMMANDER"

CLINK!

THAT'S THE SPIRIT!

WHAT THA —

FLUFFY!!

BOCKS! YOU LEFT THE TRANSPORTER ROOM DOOR UNLOCKED!

GYAAH!!

TEE HEE!

THERE'S DOZENS OF ALTERNATE UNIVERSE FLUFFYS ALL OVER THE PLACE!

SHE'S GONE AND BROKEN IT AGAIN!

TEE HEE!

DON'T WORRY

WE HAVE A "SIGH" BACKUP PLAN.

YOU CAN THROW THE GLITTER, YEOMAN!

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HEUHRLBLR!!

DOOK!

DOOK!

I SAY!

YEAH, GET 'EM ALL OUT OF HERE, SOCKS.

MAKE SURE THEY HAVEN'T CRAWLED BEHIND THE BULKHEADS.

AND WHEN YOU'VE FOUND THE ORIGINAL, GET YOURSELVES TO THE MAIN HATCH

WE'RE GOING TO ANTELOPOLIS.

SO... CAN YOU *LAND* THIS SHIP ON THE PLANET'S SURFACE?

ER...

NOT AS SUCH.

YOU HAVE A SHUTTLEPOD, THEN?

NO.

YOU'RE *NOT* ALL SQUEEZING INTO *MY* LITTLE SKYFLY!

NO.

HOW THEN, "*COMMANDER*", DO YOU PLAN TO GET FROM ORBIT TO THE SURFACE?

DING!

DING!

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AH, IT'S TOO BAD CK DIDN'T MEET UP WITH JG IT WOULDA BEEN NICE TO TEAM UP FOR ONCE.

YEAH.

OH WELL, IT'S HIS LOSS!

YOU'RE RIGHT! WE'VE NEVER NEEDED A TRANSPORTER BEFORE, HAVE WE?

NOW ARRIVING: HOTEL GAZE...!

ALREADY?

THAT'S US, SWEETHEART!

HERE WE ARE, FOLKS!

ENJOY YOUR STAY IN BEAUTIFUL DOWNTOWN ANTELOPOLIS!

JOB WELL DONE DRIVER! THANK YOU!

DON'T FORGET YOUR COMPLEMENTARY TRAVEL MAP AND FREE BUG CANDY!

THANKS!

HELLO! WE'RE HERE TO MEET A MR FORTISCUE.

A LITTLE SHEEP FELLOW.

Target has arrived, my Queen.

Target has arrived, my Queen.

Target has arrived, my Queen.

Target has arrived, my Queen.

Target has arrived, my Queen

Target has arrived, my Queen

Target has arrived, my Queen

HEY FREEDA! IT'S ONE OF THOSE FLASH MOB THINGS!

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MEANWHILE, LYING IN WAIT AT THE HOTEL GAZEL...

Fortiscue Do you know what went *wrong* with the last meeting?

WRONG?

that FEMALE!

That *imperfect panda's* presence was an INSULT!

ER... YES, YOUR... UM... ER...

She gets her own *button* an' *everything!*

Fate has ordained *ME* as the galaxy's *Perfect Female*

I do *NOT* intend to suffer the sight of *anything IMPERFECT*

Fortunately, once we have the spacer's brain, my exposure to this *insufficiently indefectible* universe will come to an end. After today, Perfection will *spread* like a wave from system to system, and I will

CONQUER THE GALAXY!!

YES!

AND IT *WILL* BE DONE, YOUR BOMBASTICNESS!!

...and the *SECOND* thing.

I thought the goons could hide in the *wardrobe,* instead of the balcony!

What do you think?

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Target is approaching, my Queen

THANKS FOR THE LIFT!

GLOM!

MMMFPH!

FREEDA!

AH, EXCELLENT NEWS! THE SPACER FEMALE HAS BEEN SEQUESTERED, MY ONE-AND-ONLYNESS.

As she *should* be! Ace has suffered her imperfect company long enough!

SNERT

ME!

HE'S HERE!

CLAMBER

BOOMF

OOPS! Wait til I get in my hoverpod!

WELCOME, MISTER --?

OH, HELLO!

HMM?

WHY YES, IT'S ABOUT A QUARTER OF --

GLITTER!

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TSK. NICE GOING, SOCKS.

DOES THAT LOOK LIKE ACE TO YOU?

PHLEEAH!

GLAAUCH!

I DON'T GET IT! PRACTICALLY EVERYONE IN THIS CRAZY HOTEL WAS SAYING ACE WAS HEADED TO THIS ROOM!

WEAUUGH!!

HOW?

How did this happen?

Their leader

He was able to compromise my plans.

and make it look like an accident!

There can only be one explanation. His brain must be superior to Ace.

Perhaps, even more Perfect than--

Fortiscue! Return at once!

My plans have changed!

ER... DID YOU SAY CHANGED??

We have a new .

OBJECTIVE

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YOU SEE, YOU WIND THE STR NG AROUND THE YOYO, AND TIE THE OTHER END ON YOUR *FINGER.*

OOOH.

DON'T YOU *DOOK DOOK* AT ME, SOCKS! IS *ACE* A SMALL SHEEP?

NO!

YOU HAD *ONE* TASK, AND YOU *COMPLETELY* BLEW —

UM- COMMANDER?

I UM...

UM..

You know *Ace?*

BLEW ..

...*BLUE HOO HOO!*

Any friend of Ace

is a friend of *mine.*

WHO? ACE? YEAH, WE'RE LIKE *THIS!*

JUST WATCH WHERE YOU'RE YO-YO-ING ---

YOU!

YOU AGAIN!?

OH, *HER?*

SHE'S NOT WITH *ME.*

UM. CAN I USE YOUR BATHRO—

OH WOW, *NEAT!*

TEAM

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STOP!

UM, YEOMAN?

TURN AROUND YOU MONSTER!

WHAT DID YOU DO WITH THEM?!?

SPIN

SPIN BACK

You're about to find out, you FREAK!!

GRYAAAAAGGHH!!

WWEEEEEEE

KRAKOOO

JUST FOR FUN, LET'S *REWIND* A BIT, AND SEE WHAT WENT ON THERE!

REWIND

YOU KNOW, NIN WAH .. I *APPRECIATE* TEAM PARTICIPATION, BUT...

COMMANDER, I *REALLY* GOTTA--

BLIP! TARGET IS NOW DEAD.

PLEASE CONTACT A SALES REP FOR FURTHER ASSISTANCE.

HA! Out of the way, *freak!*

KER-CHAK!

WANNA-- *YIKES!*

...FILL US IN ON YOUR *PLAN*, YEOMAN??

ZING!

STUPID THING GOT RESET TO "*STORE DEMO*" MODE... *HANG ON!!*

Excellent reflexes, Cat! You are certainly proving your value to my *collection!*

TI-CHIK!

OW!

What the?

YO!

YO.

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WH-WHAT'S GOING ON, YOUR MAGNIFICENCE?

YOUDON'TMINDIFIUSE YOURBATHROOMDOYOU THANKS!

Fortiscue!

Tag that Cat!

WHAT THE WHO NOW?

RIGHT AWAY!

JUST

HOLD

STILL

..CAT?

TAG!

HWRGK!

MINE!

And as for YOU!

BRING IT ON, "PERFECTION"

SNAP!

Seize her!

GRAB!

GLOMP!

EEK!

TICKLISH!

AND THERE YOU HAVE IT!

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VIDEO FROM THE INCIDENT AT HOTEL GAZEL CAUGHT A GLIMPSE OF A SMALL ESCAPE POD FLEEING THE SCENE SHORTLY AFTER THE EXPLOSION.

AMATEUR FOOTAGE

A MULTI-SYSTEM TRIPLE-I TASK FORCE IS INVESTIGATING THE SCENE FOR ANY CLUES TO THE CAUSE.

SO FAR, THEIR ONLY LEADS ARE A YOYO, A FAKE MUSTACHE, AND A BOTTLE OF DECORATIVE GLITTER.

!!

CLICK

COMMANDER?

MR SOCKS?

OH SORRY, I HAD THE FAN ON... DID SOMETHING HAPP—

OH WOW!

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WHAT'S YOUR NAME, SPACER?

AND WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

I'M Jmm.. Ummm. MITTENS.. I JUST HAD TO um. USE THE er ah.. FACILITIES!

AWAY TEAM

CAN YOU TELL US HOW THIS ENORMOUS EXPLOSION TOOK PLACE?

B-BUT I DIDN'T--!

IT WAS HEARD ALL OVER THE CITY!

WHAT EXACTLY WERE YOU DOING WHEN THE WALLS AND WINDOWS WERE BLOWN OUT?

I HAD THE FAN ON!

AWAY TEAM

AT THE MOMENT OF THIS DEVASTATING PERCUSSIVE ERUPTION, WHERE—

NEW ORDERS, SIR!

I'M ASSIGNED TO ESCORT THIS SPACER TO HQ FOR DEBRIEFING.

IT WASN'T ME! AHHH!!!

AWAY TEAM

YEAH, TAKE HIM AWAY! WE'VE GOT TO CHECK OUT THE BLAST PATTERN FOR THE ANGLE OF TRAJECTORY.

THIS WAY SPACER!

IT WAS JUST A NUMBER ONE!!

AWAY TEAM

RELAX, FELLA. WHADDYA SAY WE DITCH THIS PLACE?

MORRISP?

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DON'T WORRY PAL. HE AND FREEDA ARE OKAY.

OKAY CREW. LISTEN UP.

BUT MR MORRIS, WE CAME HERE TO *MEET* YOU GUYS. WHERE'S CAPTAIN ACE ?

AWAY

THERE AREN'T MANY *INJURIES* HERE, BUT KEEP IN MIND...

TRIPLE-I COMMAND DOESN'T WANT *ANYONE* TO *LEAVE* THIS SCENE. *UNDERSTOOD?*

MAKE WAY!

MAKE WAY!

GLORIOUS LEADER COMING THROUGH!

!@#*!

GOT THAT EVERYONE?

NO ONE LEAVES THIS HOTEL UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE!

!?!

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LATER IN A PRIVATE CORNER OF ANTELOPOLIS...

UM... YES, YOUR OPTIMISMNESS.

at least we tagged that *Cat spacer* in all the confusion.

BEEP

BOOP

BLIP

Quickly! Isolate the brain patterns, so may *control* him!

UNUSUAL... THESE DON'T LOOK LIKE *NORMAL* CAT BRAIN WAVES.

GOT IT!

NO...

NO, I DON'T.

BEEP

BLIP

THAT'S IT!

I THINK?

Fortiscue!

let me listen

ONE MOMENT, YOUR WORSHIP.

BLOOP

BEEP

HBLRUBLH

DOOK! DOOK! DOOK!

HRLBLUHRB!

Incredible! He's invented a unique language just to *think* with!

HOW CAN WE TRANSLATE THIS BRILLIANT *MENTAL CYPHER*?

WELCOME TO T.J. McSHLORGLEHOFFER'S! WHO'S UP FOR A *FENTOOZLER*?

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ALSO MEANWHILE, IN A POD BREAKING ORBIT OF GAZELLE..

I'M TELLING YOU, I'VE NEVER SEEN HER BEFORE!!

HOW DID WE GET IN HERE ANYWAY?

...OH, YOU JUST HAPPEN TO BE IN LEAGUE WITH THE ONES THAT WIPED OUT MY PREVIOUS GANG.

DON'T ASK ME, I WAS TOO BUSY DODGING ENERGY BEAMS AND BURNING DEBRIS.

KLUNK

BONK

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

WILL YOU SETTLE DOWN?

I'M JUST TRYING TO GET UNTWISTED HERE, OKAY?!

WELL, CAN YOU DO IT WITHOUT JABBING ME IN THE ARM?

DON'T TELL ME THAT ONE DESTROYS CITIES AS WELL!

ARE YOU DONE?

YES.

I'M SORRY I HAVE THE EFFRONTERY TO SIT NEXT TO YOU, MISS PERSONAL-SPACE.

EEEE!!

TSK... NOW WHAT?

KRACK!

OH, HI!

I FOUND SOME CHEWY GUM IN YOUR POCKET.

DID YOU WANT SOME?

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HEY! PURPLE PANTS... SNAP OUT OF IT!

I'M SORRY, OKAY?

OH GEEZ... OH GEEZ...

NOM NOM NOM NOM NOM NOM NOM BLEAGH!

I UH...

I TH NK I'D BETTER PLUG UP THAT LEAK SOMEHOW!

GIVE IT HERE.

GUUARGHH

YUK! THITH GUM TATHTES LIKE THTICKS!

SQUEDGE!

SPROSH!

EW! EW! EW!!

OOOOH! I DIDN'T KNOW YOU COULD DO THAT!

I WANT ANOTHER PIECE!

NO! GIMME THAT.

IT'S FOR MEDICINAL PURPOSES ONLY.

OK, I THINK THAT SHOULD HOLD FOR NOW.

HOPEFULLY, WHEREVER THIS TH NG LANDS...

WILL HAVE A FIRST AID KIT OR SOMETH NG...

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I THINK WE'VE LANDED SOMEWHERE.

HUH? WHAT-- WHAT HAPPENED?

LISTEN... I'M SORRY... I THOUGHT YOU--

BUH. *sniff* I'M ALL CONGESTED

sniff snort

KER- SNORT!!

GULP

GYAH!

THUMP!

UNLATCH!

EW!! EW! EW! GYAAH!! EW! BWEAULUGH!

WHOA.

BLEAH! WHAT TASTES LIKE BAMBOO?

CK...

...I DON'T THINK WE'RE ON GAZELLE ANYMORE.

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WOW. THIS PLACE COULD REALLY USE A PLANT OR SOMETHING.

STAY CLOSE, CREWMAN.

LET'S STICK TOGETHER IN THIS HOSTILE ENEMY TERRITORY.

Pweep!

?

HUMMMMWUM WU... IM WUM WUMMM

ZENITH??

GYAH!! TAKE HER! TAKE HER!!

I MEAN ER...

GOOD JOB FLUFFY

NOW MAYBE WE CAN GET SOME ANSWERS.

JERK.

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HUMMM-WUM-WUM-WUM-WUM-WUM

DINNG!

OOOOH!

OKAY, LET'S GET SOME INFORMA~ HEY!

GAH! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

YOU CAN'T JUST GO PRESSING STRANGE BUTTONS AT RANDOM IN A DEATH TRAP LIKE THIS!

TSK!

YEAH!

WE'VE GOT TO ANALYZE THIS ALIEN CONTROL PANEL, AND DECIPHER THESE MYSTERIOUS SYMBOLS!

IT WAS AN F1 KEY.

..F2

..F3.

TAKE YOUR TIME.

...WE... THEY'RE USING A PRETTY LAME FONT FOR IT!

TAP

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OKAY .. UM...

WHAT IS THIS PLACE?

QUESTION!

OK, IF YOU SAY ONE MORE STUPID TH NG, I WILL KICK YOU...

SO

HARD.

ahem

WHERE IS THE BATHROOM?

NOT STUPID!

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WHRRR WHRRR WHRRR

RRRIP!

SIGH...

WHRRR WHRRR WHRRR

RRRIP!

COMPUTER, WHAT DO YOU MAKE HERE?

"INHABITANT?"

AS IN "JUST ONE PERSON WORKS HERE?"

HOW MANY ARE ON BOARD THIS LAB?

MOTION DETECTOR THINGS...

NEVER WORK PROP--

!!!!

You.

Come with us.

YES, MA'AM!!

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HEY SWEETIE, HAVE I MENTIONED HOW MUCH I LOVE *STRIPES*?

BUT DON'T WORRY! *YOU TWO* ARE STILL ON MY DANCE CARD!

CAN YOU TELL ME WHO THIS "INHABITANT" IS?

[redacted]

THE LITTLE *SHEEP* GUY??

[redacted]

WHAT'S THE "ZENITH PROJECT"?

[redacted]

ARTIFICIAL..?

YOU'RE TALKING *ANDROIDS* HERE?

[redacted]

IS THERE A PHASE 2?

[redacted]

...GATHER *RESOURCES*...

GRRR...

ER...

THE MALE *ANDROID* COUNTERPART, RIGHT?

[redacted]

I SAID, PHASE 2 IS STILL ABOUT *ANDROIDS*, RIGHT?

[redacted]

ABATTOIR

"...ABATTOIR..."

RROOWR...

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NO!

For the *last time*, I did *not* save room for *dessert!!*

don't forget your payment card!

Make a note, Fortiscue. Isolate that tenacity gene and add it to the *goon* formula

Now *activate* the tag on that purple Cat, and bring him *right here!*

YES YOUR IMPATIENTNESS.

TRANSMITTING...

blip blip

blip blip

SORRY, BUT COULD YOU MOVE ALONG PLEASE?

WE'RE EXPECTING SOMEONE.

blip blip

What does that *beeping* mean? Is he getting *close?*

OH ...SHUCKS.

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OKAY T LOOKS LIKE MR SOCKS GOT TAGGED IN ALL THE CONFUSION.

HE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE SUFFERING ANY EFFECTS FROM IT, THOUGH.

ZENITH'S NOT TOO HAPPY FOR SOME REASON. I'M GUESSING SHE WAS AFTER SOMEONE ELSE

MAYBE YOU, ACE. THAT'S WHY SHE SET UP THAT MEETING.

A TRAP?

WHAT HAVE I GOT THAT SHE WOULD NEED?

SHE'S LOOKING FOR PERFECT PARTS... THE LAST THING ON HER LIST IS A DECENT BRAIN

BUT LET'S NOT FORGET MR SOCKS IS NO MENTAL SLOUCH EITHER.

IF SHE DISCOVERS THAT, HE'S IN TROUBLE

COPY THAT WE SEE THEM NOW.

LET'S KEEP TAILING THEM. WE'LL SEE WHERE THEY GO FROM HERE.

GOOD WORK, TEAM.

I'M IMPRESSED, NEWBIE! YOU'VE GOT A KNACK FOR PUTTING THE PIECES TOGETHER!

I AGREE ACE.

I FIGURED HE JUST NEEDED AN ENCOURAGING ENVIRONMENT.

...AND A COOL NEW OUTFIT!

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...YOU'RE SAYING YOU WANT TO HELP ZENITH?

NO, FREEDA, BUT WE NEED TO GET CLOSER TO HER TO FIND HER SECRET BASE!

SO WHERE DO WE START?

I THINK IT'S SAFE TO PRESUME THAT THE COMMANDER AND NIN WAH WERE ABOARD THE SKY POD THAT TOOK OFF FROM THE EXPLOSION.

IT TOOK SUCH A DIRECT PATH, THAT I'LL BET IT WAS ON AUTO-PILOT TO ZENITH'S BASE.

SO THAT LEFT ZENITH STRANDED HERE ON GAZELLE.

WHADDYAMEAN NO CASHEWS?

THAT'S WHY SHE'S SPENT THE LAST TWO HOURS TRYING TO CHARTER A PRIVATE FLIGHT

...BUT SHE DEMANDS SO MUCH PERFECTION, NO ONE CAN ACCOMMODATE HER.

WE NEED TO ACT NOW, BEFORE SHE FINALLY DOES GET A RIDE.

BUT MITTENS...

FOLLOWING SOMEONE ON THE SURFACE IS ONE THING...

FOLLOWING SOMEONE IN SPACE IS A WHOLE LOT HARDER!

OH, WE'RE NOT GOING TO FOLLOW HER, ACE.

WE'RE GONNA GIVE 'ER A LIFT!

KLAK!

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WHOA, MITTENS!

GET THAT THING OUT RIGHT NOW!

RELAX, ACE!

IT'S JUST AN EMPTY CASING.

I GOT ONE OF THOSE CHEAP KNOCK-OFFS AND TOOK THE INSIDES OUT.

UH... OKAY.

BUT HOW IS THAT GOING TO HELP US RESCUE CK?

1

2

3

GAZELIE

WELL, IT'S LIKE THIS. YOU THREE TAKE THE VELVET KNIGHT UP TO OUR SHIP AND FLY IT DOWN HERE TO PICK US UP.

BY THAT TIME, I'LL HAVE CONVINCED ZENITH TO LET US TAKE HER ABOARD.

THEN, SHE TELLS US THE COORDINATES OF HER SECRET BASE!

SHE'LL BE SURE TO RECOGNIZE US!

THAT'S OKAY! YOU CAN ALL HIDE IN MY QUARTERS!

I'VE GOT A FUNSTATION 3000 YOU CAN PLAY!

BUT WON'T SHE RECOGNIZE YOU, MITTENS?

NAH! I DON'T THINK SHE EVER GOT A GOOD LOOK AT ME

ANYWAY I'M SURE THINGS WILL SORT THEMSELVES OUT!

COME ON!!

ACE?

...IS THIS A PLAN?

WE'VE CREATED A SPACER MONSTER!

LAST ONE THERE'S A BIG NUMPF!

I'M SCARED.

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Fortiscue, I will *not* stay another *minute* on this planet!

WE'VE TRIED EVERY TRAVEL SERVICE ON GAZELLE!

NONE OF THEM MATCH WITH YOUR PERFECTLY JUSTIFIABLE CRITERIA!

Well then, maybe I'm justified in *vaporizing* your wooly --

...*BEFORE* YOU DO *THAT!*

YES?

PERHAPS *MR PERFECT SPACE LIMOUSINES* CAN BE OF SERVICE?

"MR PERFECT?" I DIDN'T SEE YOU IN THE LISTINGS!

THAT'S BECAUSE THE LISTINGS WERE *TOO IMPERFECT* FOR US TO BE INCLUDED IN THEM.

WE WILL HAPPILY MEET *ALL* YOUR NEEDS!

MOVIES ON DEMAND?

OVER THREE MILLION!

SHIATSU MASSAGE?

STANDING BY!

UN-SHELLED PISTACHIOS?

FRESH EVERY DAY!

FREE TABLA LESSONS?

AJRARA, PUNJAB OR FARUKHABAD GHARĀNĀ?

PLUS! OUR SHIPS COME EQUIPPED WITH THE LATEST IN SOPHISTICATED AND *HIGHLY VAPORIZABLE* ROBOT VALETS TO CATER TO YOUR EVERY WHIM.

We... *do* like vaporizing things! *You're hired!*

RIGHT THIS WAY, PLEASE!

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THIS IS MITTENS YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT, ACE?

HE'S LIKE A BRAND NEW CAT!

WE THOUGHT WE'D JUST GIVE HIM A LITTLE *ENCOURAGEMENT*, AND IT WAS LIKE HIS BRAIN *CHANGED CHANNELS!*

WELL, FORGIVE ME IF I REMAIN SKEPTICAL, CAPTAIN...

WE ONLY NEVER LAND THE SHIP BECAUSE HE PANICS MAKING A U-TURN.

JUST AS PROMISED, YOUR EXCELLENCY.

I PRESUME YOU'LL WANT ME TO STOW YOUR LUGGAGE *BEFORE* YOU BOARD?

er... Yes, of course! Do it *at once!*

AH, *MOUSE!* JUST THE AI UNIT I WANTED TO SEE!

NICE CLOTHES, TUBBY

YOU LOOK LIKE A THRIFT STORE THREW UP ON YOU.

YOU MIND TELLING ME WHAT'S GOING ON? WHERE'S THE COMMANDER?

BLIP

ARE YOU LISTENING?

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

I'M UPGRADING YOUR SOFTWARE TO *MOUSE VISTA™*

WHAT?!

POING! POING!

WHOA! WHOA! WHOA! NO NEED TO DO ANYTHING WE'LL ALL REGRET!

YEAH, LET'S NOT BE HASTY... ER... LIEUTENANT!

OK, THEN *LISTEN UP!*

HERE'S HOW THIS IS GOING DOWN, MOUSE.

...AND I DON'T WANT A PEEP OUT OF YOU..

YES, LIEUTENANT

IRON YOUR SHIRT?

THAT SETTLES IT. I'M HIDING.

ROGER THAT.

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SO!

LET ME GET THIS STRAIGHT.

THIS PLACE IS A GREAT BIG LABORATORY?

DESIGNED TO CUT UP LIVING BEINGS AND SPLICE THEM TOGETHER JUST TO CREATE A PERFECT PLAYMATE FOR A SOCIOPATHIC ANDROID??

SO WHAT HAPPENS TO ALL THE ~

HEY GIRLS, LISTEN!

I KNOW I MIGHT HAVE COME OFF A BIT AGGRESSIVE JUST NOW...

BUT LET'S NOT RUSH INTO TH NGS, OKAY?!

...spare parts?

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EEP!

AROO?

VRRT! VOORT! VRRT!

KER BLAM!!!

KLANK!

OKAY, YOU BLUE BOOGERS!

WHO'S NEXT??

GYAH!

ME AN' MY BIG MOUTH!

PYOO PYOO PYOO

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We have completed our initial scans

Ready to proceed

MY CREW WILL COME LOOKING FOR ME, YOU HOT FIENDS!

I... I THINK!!

BLIP!

SWOOSH

?

...IS THAT? COULD IT BE??

OFFICER FLUFFY!

WHAT'S GOING ON HERE!?

You should not wander away like that.

Please stay with the tour leader

...JUS' WANTED TO KNOW WHAT WAS GOIN' ON IS ALL...

PSSST!! FLUFFY! PSSSST! HEY!

I found this visitor wandering outside the foyer. What is happening here?

Just a routine encephalectomy

You and your guest are welcome to observe.

PSSSST!

Come

We will be safe from airborne skull fragments in the observation lounge

MR SOCKS! YEOMAN WAH!! good lord. . MITTENS!!!

I KNOW HOW YO-YOS WORK!

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OK, WE'RE ON OUR WAY TO ZENITH'S SECRET BASE!

YOU JUST HIDE HERE IN MY QUARTERS TIL WE GET THERE!

YEAH SURE TH NG, MITTENS.

THERE'S ROOM HERE. DO YOU WANT TO SIT?

NO. MITTENS MAY *DRESS* LIKE A *BITZY-CAT*..

BUT HIS QUARTERS SMELL LIKE *NACHO-RITO BREATH!*

ACE! *WHY* ARE YOU GOING ALONG WITH THIS *LUDICROUS* PLAN??

BECAUSE IT'S *WORKING!*

EVERYTHING JUST SEEMS TO BE FALLING INTO PLACE FOR MITTENS.

IT'S MAK NG ME RE-EVALUATE MY *OWN* LEADERSH.P ABILITIES.

I CAN'T EXPLAIN .T!

I MEAN, I HAVE THE *BEST* SPACER CREW IN THE GALAXY, BUT DOES THAT ALONE MAKE *ME* A GOOD LEADER?

WHEN YOU *THINK* ABOUT IT, HOW MUCH OF MY SUCCESS HAS BEEN MY *OWN* SKILL...

...AND HOW MUCH HAS JUST BEEN *DUMB LUCK?*

BLEEP!

OH *SORRY.*

.. THOUGHT TH.S WAS THE POWDER ROOM.

SWOOSH!

What is that commotion?

UM... FREE *STEP-DANCING CLASS* ON THE LIDO DECK!

THIS WAY TO THE OBSERVATION DOME!

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YOW!

HOLD STILL, YOU LITTLE COTTON BALL!

ACE! HELP US!

UM... MAYBE WE SHOULD CHECK WITH MITTENS FIRST?

FREEDA! GET HIS HEAD BEFORE HE MAKES CONTACT WITH ZENITH!

ACE...

GOTCHA!

THESE IKnows ARE THE KEY! ANYONE WEARING ONE IS AN UNWILLING PAWN IN ZENITH'S ARMY!

IS... IS HE OKAY?

BE CAREFUL. THERE'S NO TELLING HOW HE'LL REACT... WHAT HIS FIRST INSTINCTS WILL BE WITHOUT THAT THING WARPING HIS BRAIN!

OH!

...IS THE IKnow 2 OUT YET?

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I'M SURE YOU'LL WANT TO ENJOY THE SCENERY IN OUR MOST COMFORTABLE OBSERVATION DECK CHAIR.

er ALONE.

Yes, yes. be off with you.

I'LL JUST CHECK ON THE uh... WHITE TRUFFLE SORBET N THE GALLEY

YAH! WHAT'S HE DO NG IN HERE?

IT'S OKAY, MITTENS.

WE GOT THE !Know OFF HIM... AND WE TOLD HIM WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING ON GAZELLE.

I USED SOME OF THE ZENITH CODE IN THE !Knows. I GUESS THEY WERE COMPATIBLE ENOUGH FOR HER TO TAKE CONTROL.

I NEVER SAW WHAT ZENITH WAS DOING BEH ND MY BACK. ...NEVER REALIZED THAT SHE... THAT "IT" .. WAS CAPABLE OF SUCH EVIL.

I INVENTED ZENITH IN AN ATTEMPT TO CREATE PERFECTION.

..I INVENTED THESE !Knows SO PEOPLE MIGHT HAVE ALL THE GALAXY'S NFORMATION WITH JUST A THOUGHT

BUT NOW... I DON'T THINK PERFECTION IS ALL THAT GREAT

AND KNOWING EVERYTHING DOESN'T MEAN YOU KNOW RIGHT FROM WRONG.

I'LL HELP YOU.

ANY WAY I CAN.

RIGHT AFTER I CHECK WHO WON "HOOFING WITH THE STARS" LAST NIGHT!

NO!!!

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NO, LIEUTENANT MITTENS. I DON'T KNOW HOW THEY DID THIS, AND WE ARE NOT STAYING LONG ENOUGH TO FIND OUT!
UM...
MAYBE WE CAN JUST SWING BY THAT BOUTIQUE WE PASSED?

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HEY.

HERE'S A WILD IDEA, EVERYONE.

NOW THAT ZENITH GAVE US COORDINATES TO HER SECRET BASE...

IT'S GETTIN' CROWDED IN HERE.

AND NOW THAT OL' WHATSISNAME HERE IS ON OUR SIDE NOW.

FORTISCUE.

WHY DON'T WE BLOW OPEN THE OBSERVATION DECK HATCH, AND SHUNT HER OFF INTO SPACE?

THAT'S ACTUALLY A *REALLY* GOOD IDEA, MOUSE!

MAKE IT SO!

OH..

EXCEPT FOR ONE TEENY PROBLEM.

WHAT? WHAT IS IT?

FLING

KRAKK!

I WAS ON SPEAKER.

// TSK

// WHY THEY MADE THAT
// THE DEFAULT SETTING
// I'LL NEVER KNOW

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You almost had me

But of course, your *imperfections* proved to be your downfall!

Prepare to get *TAGGED*.

Fartiscue! We're going to —!?

So!

You were able to shear the sheep

No matter!

BE CAREFUL! SHE'S *DANGEROUS!*

EXPECT *ANYTHING!*

ZIP!

I...

I DIDN'T EXPECT *THAT!*

A *skyfly!*

And my *luggage!*

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TALK TO ME, MOUSE... STATUS REPORT!

THE GOOD NEWS IS, WE'RE APPROACHING THE COORDINATES OF THE BASE.

THE BAD NEWS IS ZENITH TOOK THE SKYFLY THAT WAS IN THE CARGO BAY, AND MR SOCKS WITH IT.

WELL, JUST ADD IT TO THE LIST OF THINGS THAT NEED RESCUING TODAY!

WHADDYA SAY, MORRIS?

RIGHT BEHIND YOU!

ACE! ARE YOU COMING?

I... UHH.

I'LL CATCH UP WITH YOU AL...

I THINK I NEED A MINUTE OR TWO TO CLEAR MY HEAD.

WHAT IS WRONG WITH YOU, ACE!?!?!

shudder

IS IT TOO LATE TO GET VAPORIZED?

HUFF!!

TAKE A NUMBER, PAL.

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THERE IT IS! ZENITH'S BASE!

ARRGH!

WE CAN'T FIRE ON ZENITH AS LONG AS MR SOCKS IS ON BOARD WITH HER!

SHE HAD US CORNERED BACK THERE!

THERE MUST HAVE BEEN A REASON WHY SHE DECIDED TO FLEE INSTEAD OF TAGGING US ALL!

ANY IDEAS, FORTISCUE?

GULP!!

I THINK SHE JUST DOESN'T LIKE US ANY MORE!!

SWOOSH!

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Skull saw *ready.*

Gouging lasers at full capacity

Cerebral scooper standing by

WAIT!! STOP!!

SOMETHING PLEASE HAPPEN!!

* * *

Understood. Zenith.

New orders.

Transfer patient to suspension chamber

WHEW!!

HEY THAT WAS A HECK OF A *CLOSE CALL*, HUH?

WHADDYASAY YOU AN' I CELEBRATE MY *NOT* BE NG LOBOTOMISED WITH A LITTLE--

DOOK! DOOK! HLBRUHB LBRUHB! DOOK!

YES, HELLO SOCKS.

AM-SCRAY WI.L YAP

?!

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OKAY...

huff...

TOUGH GUY...

gasp

IT'S DOWN TO YOU...

koff-koff

AND TO ME.

IF YOU'RE LUCKY... MAYBE THEY'LL BE ABLE TO ATTACH A BETTER LOOKING FACE AFTER I M DONE MESSIN' YOURS UP!

Attention! All goons report to their defense stations!

Repeat! All goons report to their defense stations!

This is not a drill!

HUH?

WHERE...

WHA..?

HUFF .

PUFF .

...WHY COULDN'T YOU'VE SAID THAT AN HOUR AGOOO...

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OKAY. YOU GO MAKE YOURSELF MORE BEAUTIFUL.

I'LL BE HERE....

...WAITING.

TWO HOURS LATER.

egads, I'm thirsty

all good skuff's things come to those who wait.

Take your time.

Oh, YOU'RE here!

You wonderful, imperfect TEASE!

You know, at *first* I thought he'd make a decent replacement for that sycophant Fortescue once I put a coherent brain in his skull

Imagine my surprise when his brain's mental capacity was *120% greater* than yours!

I knew *right then* had found my match!

WUFF AH YOO TAWKIG ABOWF?

I'm saying my little project is *finally* out of beta!

WHUH?

DOOK.

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Intruders?

Signs of outsider involvement

Provocation.

Look.

One of the guests. The red panda female.

Curious. She is still functioning. Vital signs at 37 percent.

Analyzing cybertronic appendage.

Model WN98XP Blaster 3000 plugin

Obsolete technology

Consult protocol.

Standby

Confirmed. Suitable candidate for reconstruction

Prosthetic?

Beyond repair. Recommend replacement

Search inventory for replacement

Match found.

Alert sick bay to prepare for emergency procedure.

Aww

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MITTENS! YOU WERE RIGHT!

FLYING BACKWARDS FOOLS THEM INTO FIRING WHERE WE'VE BEEN, AND NOT WHERE WE'RE GOING!

YEAH, BUT WE'VE STILL GOT A METRIC BUTTLOAD OF DRONES TO DODGE BEFORE WE CAN DOCK, THOUGH!

ZERZAP!

MORRIS, GO BELOW AND DIVERT ALL AUXILIARY POWER TO AFT SENSORS!

AYE!

OKAY MITTENS, I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU THINK YOU ARE SINCE YOU WENT ALL BITZY ON US...

...DREAMING UP THESE INSANE PLANS TO GET US ALL KILLED...

BEEP THROTTLE STEER

...ORDERING MORRIS AROUND LIKE A CABIN BOY!

...AND IN THE MEANTIME, ACE IS SITTING IN YOUR QUARTERS LIKE A [illegible] BECAUSE YOU WANT TO SHOW OFF!

WELL I'VE HAD IT!

I'M GIVING YOU JUST FIVE SECONDS TO--

FREEDA!!!

EITHER SIT DOWN AND HELP ME, OR I WILL STRAP YOU DOWN AND GAG YOU!!!

GOT IT??

SIT

THANK YOU, FREEDA!

CONGRATULATIONS

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MITTENS! YOU WERE RIGHT!

FLYING BACKWARDS FOOLS THEM INTO FIRING WHERE WE'VE BEEN, AND NOT WHERE WE'RE GOING!

ZIP!

YEAH, BUT WE'VE STILL GOT A METRIC BUTTLOAD OF DRONES TO DODGE BEFORE WE CAN DOCK, THOUGH!

MORRIS, GO BELOW AND DIVERT ALL AUXILIARY POWER TO AFT SENSORS!

BRK

AYE!

OKAY MITTENS, I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU THINK YOU ARE SINCE YOU WENT ALL BITZY ON US...

...DREAMING UP THESE INSANE PLANS TO GET US ALL KILLED...

BEEP

THROTTLE

...ORDERING MORRIS AROUND LIKE A CABIN BOY!

...AND IN THE MEANTIME, ACE IS SITTING IN YOUR QUARTERS LIKE A NUMPH, JUST BECAUSE YOU WANT TO SHOW OFF!

WELL I'VE HAD IT!

I'M GIVING YOU JUST FIVE SECONDS TO—

FREEDA!!!

EITHER SIT DOWN AND HELP ME, OR I WILL STRAP YOU DOWN AND GAG YOU!!!

GOT IT??

SIT

THANK YOU, FREEDA!

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He's just PERFECT!

He's everything wanted in a monstrous maniacal mate and more!

TECH SUPPORT

Big ears for *listening* to me

A strong back for *doing* things for me.

Big Elephant feet for eh, I keep forgetting what the feet are for

But anyway! He is the perfect man, and together, we will set this galaxy on the path to perfection!

TOO BAD FOR YOU HE STILL SOUNDS LIKE A GIBBERING *FERRET*.

Yeah, you know. I *was* a little cheesed off at first. but then I thought, "What do I need a man to *talk* for?"

My own amazing perfection is *sure* to overcome any miniscule flaws that might pop up in our perfect progeny

FLAWS LIKE CHEWING WITH HIS MOUTH OPEN? SHEDDING ALL OVER THE CONTROL PANELS? FORGETTING TO FLUSH THE —

OOOK

tee hee! Oh who's a *grumpy boy?* Take it easy now!

Well! I'm off to eradicate imperfection throughout the galaxy!

You and your little friend have fun until then!

HUH?

"LITTLE FRIEND?"

OH, *YOU'RE* HERE!

SIGH YOU WOULD NOT *BELIEVE* THE ROTTEN DAY I'VE HAD.

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CAPTAIN ACE! *QUICK!* WE'RE ABOUT TO BOARD THE LABORATORY AND THEY TOLD ME TO GET--

WHAT ARE YOU DOING??

ZENITH IS THREATENING THE EXISTENCE OF *EVERYTHING* IMPERFECT, AND YOU'RE PLAYING *VIDEO GAMES* IN MITTENS' QUARTERS?

AH YOU GUYS DON'T NEED *ME* ANYMORE

MITTENS CAN HANDLE IT.

IT'S *HOPELESS* TO TRY AND KEEP UP WITH THESE NEW UPSTARTS THESE DAYS.

CAPTAIN ACE, THERE'S *ALWAYS* HOPE!!

WHY, EVEN WITH *ZENITH*...

ooh, is this the *new* one?

YES, SHE'S STILL IN CONTROL OF HER STITCHED-UP ARMY OF MUTILATED CREATURES, BUT *AT LEAST* SHE CAN'T GO ON TO CREATE A *NEW* RACE OF *PERFECT BEINGS.*

HOW'S THAT?

WELL, I MEAN, SHE'S AN *ANDROID* AFTER ALL, ISN'T SHE?

I NEVER WAS SURE WHAT SHE WAS *THINKING* WITH THAT

WHAT DO YOU *MEAN,* "INCOMPATIBLE OPERATING SYSTEMS?!?!"

Find me an *ADAPTER!!*

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SO MORRIS, YOU'RE A PRETTY TRUSTWORTHY CAT. WHAT MADE YOU SWITCH SIDES ON ACE LIKE THAT?

WELL, I WOULDN'T EXACTLY CALL IT "SWITCHING SIDES", MOUSE.

I MEAN, WE *ALL* HAVE OUR BAD DAYS. ACE KNOWS WE'LL ALL BE THERE FOR H.M WHEN HE GETS THINGS SORTED OUT.

UH-HUH

...AND SOMETIMES YOU JUST GOTTA RIDE THE HOT HAND, Y'KNOW?

I SEE. INTERESTING.

I ALSO SEE YOU FOUND MR SOCKS' TOOLBOX..

IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK, MOUSE .. I MEAN, *EVERYONE* ADMIRES *CONFIDENCE* IN A SPACER...

GO ON.

WELL I'VE GOT TO ADMIT .. I DON'T MEET MANY CATS WHO HAVE THE *NERVE* TO *STAND UP* TO ME LIKE THAT. IT'S PRETTY RARE THAT ANYONE GETS THE LAST WORD IN ON *ME.*

MOUSE, WHY ARE YOU *TORTURING* ME LIKE THIS? IT'S *OVER.* MORRIS... FREEDA... THE VELVET KNIGHTS ARE--

OH WAIT...

IT WAS ONE OF THE THINGS THAT ATTRACTED ME TO-- OH SORRY WHAT'S THAT, MITTENS?

OH *MITTENS,* I ABSOLUTELY *LOVE--*

MMMWAH!!

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THAT'S IT. WE'VE LANDED! EVERYONE GEAR UP AND MEET IN THE LOADING BAY.

THAT ANYONE GETS THE LAST WORD IN ON ME.

MITTENS... THAT MORALE BOOSTER I SUGGESTED EARLIER?

OH YEAH. THANKS FOR THE REMINDER, MOUSE!

IT WAS ONE OF THE THINGS THAT ATTRACTED ME TO--

OH SORRY, WHAT'S THAT MITTENS?

HERE, FREEDA. WE'RE ABOUT TO GO INTO ACTION. HAVE A HEALTHY SNACK FOR ENERGY!

OH MITTENS, I ABSOLUTELY LOVE...

MMMWAH!!

MITTENS!

OM. MOM.

NECTARINES!

HERE, ACE. HAVE A HEALTHY SNACK FOR ENERGY!

WHAT A STU-- er. GREAT IDEA, MITTENS!

IN FACT, I JUST WANTED TO SUGGEST A PLAN OF ACTION TO YOU, MITTENS.

WELL I'D LOVE TO HEAR IT, ACE!

I THINK THE TRANSPORTER IS WORKING PERFECTLY NOW.

I LIKE THIS PLAN ALREADY!

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Let's go! Let's go!

Start off and don't look back!

We made it! There's no way the Triple-I can track us now!

My boss couldn't beat a racer like you!

"ABATTOIR" FOR SOME FUN

WOKE UP ON THIS CRAZY TABLE

GONNA SCOOP OUT MY BRAIN.

...BEGAN TO THINK THEY WEREN'T REALLY INTERESTED IN...

SNAPPED THE RESTRAINTS LIKE A CBOARD...

WUHHMMMGH NGGGNN+

...REALIZED THEY COULDN'T VERPOWER ME...

PROB'LY HOOK UP WITH THEM LATER

OH YEAH, AND MR SOCKS' BRAIN IS SOME GIANT MONSTER THING...

...ARE YOU EVEN LISTENING?

UM, HELLOOO?

IS THERE ANYBODY IN THERE?

Make me owe it all to Nim Wan here 'cos...

...is that it?

KLOK!

URRGH...

WUH...

OK?

WHERE AM I?

WHAT IS WRONG WIFF YOU?

I... I... I DON'T KNOW!

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IF I MAY MAKE AN OBSERVATION...

..WITHOUT YOU HITTING ME!

MUH.. MUH

YOUR ARM LOOKS LIKE IT GOT BETTER.

GEE. YOU THINK??

SWOOSH! SWOOSH!

HJH... THOSE GIRLS MUST HAVE FIXED YOU UP AFTER DEALING WITH MR SOCKS...

"GIRLS?" OK, DON'T YOU GET IT? WE ARE THE ONLY LIVING BEINGS ON THIS STATION! EVERYONE ELSE IS EITHER ANDROIDS OR MONSTERS!

WHAT...

EVEN THAT MIXED UP WEIRDO WITH THE GIANT EAR PIERCER GUN?

ESPECIALLY HER! ZENITH IS CRAZY! THE LOBBY COMPUTER TOLD ME SHE'S TRYING TO CREATE AN ENTIRE RACE OF PERFECT BEINGS!

SHE MUST NOT KNOW SHE'S AN ANDROID!

THIS WHOLE LABORATORY IS JUST ONE BAD IDEA AFTER ANOTHER!

WHY, I WOULDN'T BE SURPRISED IF THEY'RE PUTTING LIVING BRAINS INTO LIFE-LIKE ANDROIDS NEXT!

...WHAT'S THAT LOOK FOR?

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IF YOU'RE DONE POSING FOR SPACER ILLUSTRATED, WE REALLY SHOULD GET OUT OF...

YEAH! LOOKIN' GOOD, NIN WAH! NO MORE "LEFTY"! NO MORE FREAKY LOOKS AT THE MUNICIPAL SWIMMING POOL!

OH, GO ON! YOU CAN TELL ME! I WON'T SMACK YOU.

I'M LOOKIN' PRETTY DARN HOT NOW, AREN'T I?

BOMP

..WHAT?

DO I HAVE BED HEAD?

..WELL TOO BAD

OH, WILL YOU STOP FREAKING OUT?

I'M NOT AN ANDROID!

I NO LONGER HAVE ANY DETACHABLE PARTS!

I AM ONE HUNDRED PERCENT RED PANDA, GOT IT?

ONE HUNDRED PERCENT!!!

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GET BACK HERE! WHERE ARE YOU GOING? WE'VE GOT TO SAVE MR SOCKS AND FIND --

NIN WAH! LOOK OUT! HE'S PULLING OUT A BLASTER!!

WHAT?!

WHERE!?

WHERE WHAT?

WHA... HUH?

CK?

I SAW .. GROOTLY... THERE WAS...

I...

OH CLUMP... WILL YOU LOOK AT THIS PLACE?

"LET'S PUT GLOWING MAZE WALLPAPER ON OUR GIGANTIC GLOWING MAZE", WHY DON'T WE?

IT'LL TAKE US FOREVER TO FIND ANYTHING!

?,?

SOCKS!! FLUFFY!!

WHERE ARE WE GOING?

C'MON. MAYBE IF WE FOLLOW THIS TRAIL OF WIRES, IT'LL LEAD TO SOME CIVILIZATION.

CABLES

I'm telling you [illegible] don't find an ADAPTER, I'm going to start VAPORIZING!

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Serial ports?!

USB?

HDMI!?

Optr-cable?

SCSI?

What do I *need* to make the *connection*?!?

THUMP THUMP!

sigh

Don't be *revolting* Wilma!

I don't *understand!*

I just want my army of perfect slave children to *rule the universe!*

Is that so much to ask?

My plan is *perfect!*

My creation is *perfect!*

The only logical imperfection remaining is.

Me.

SOCKS!

WHERE THE HECK...

Although.

If I'm not perfect *now*,

I can always be the most perfect one *left alive.*

UP FOR A *RUN?*

THOUGHT YOU'D NEVER ASK!

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I KNOW I CAN TRUST YOU TO PROTECT THE SHIP WHILE I GO *RESCUE* EVERYONE, MORRIS.

AYE, SIR.

READY WHEN YOU ARE, MITTENS.

TRANSPORTER IS LOCKED ON!

WELL DONE, ACE!

LET'S GO!

OH, THANK YOU, SIR!

SET US DOWN AT ACE'S COORDINATES, MORRIS!

UM... BUT MITTENS, THESE SETTINGS ARE—

QUICKLY! THERE'S NOT A MOMENT TO LOSE!

DON'T WORRY ABOUT A THING. I'VE GOT EVERYTHING *COVERED!* *TRANSPORTERIZE!*

YOU'RE THE BOSS!

WHOOSH

HUH? DID YOU SAY SOMETHING, MITTENS?

OKAY! HERE'S THE PLAN! FOR STARTERS, I THINK YOU'LL BE WANTING *THIS*, MITTENS.

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ONCE MORE INTO THE BREACH, EH FREEDA? WHADYA SAY WE PUT THIS PLACE OUT OF COMMISSION?

OUR FIRST PRIORITY SHOULD BE FINDING OUR MISSING CREW, ACE!

TSK. WHAT GIVES?

HEY HEY! FERRET JACKPOT!

OH, ACE! YOU FOUND MR SOCKS!

HUH?

KA-CHING!

JUST ANOTHER DAY FOR THE GALAXY'S GREATEST SPACER!

OOF! UP YOU GET BIG FELLA!

UM. NOT TO BRAG, FREEDA, BUT I'M THE ONE WHO

UH-OH!

LOOKS LIKE SOMEONE'S GOT A BRAIN MISSING HERE!

WHAT NOW, ACE?

OBVIOUSLY, OUR FIRST PRIORITY SHOULD BE FINDING CK AND THE OTHERS.

...BUT WHERE TO START?

WELL IT LOOKS LIKE THIS IS A GIANT SUPER COMPUTER. WE COULD TRY ACCESSING THE TERMINAL AND --

SOCKS? ANY IDEAS?

HNNN GGN!!

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THIS IS RIDICULOUS...

COME IN, MORRIS. ACE HERE. GET THAT FORTISCUE GUY ON THE HORN WILL YA? WE NEED A TOUR GUIDE FOR THIS CRAZY PLACE

OH. YOU MUST HAVE TRANSPORTERIZED INTO THE STORAGE MORGUE THAT'S WHERE ZENITH KEPT LEFTOVER PARTS.

BLIP

BLOOP

OKAY TAKE THE FIRST CORRIDOR ON THE LEFT, AND FOLLOW THAT TIL YOU REACH AN INTERSECTION THAT SAYS "VISITORS" ONE WAY, AND "STAFF" THE OTHER WAY

YOU'RE GONNA WANNA GO THE "VISITORS" WAY.

AFTER THAT, THERE'S THE BREAK ROOM. IT LOOKS LIKE A BIG AQUARIUM.

I REALLY DON'T KNOW WHY, BUT IT DOES.

YOU SHOULD BE PASSING BY THE RECEPTION LOUNGE NOW. IF THE FLOOR IS GRATED AND KINDA STICKY, YOU'RE GOING THE RIGHT WAY

IF YOUR COMM LINE BREAKS UP, IT MEANS YOU'RE ENTERING THE "NO PRESS" SECTION. JUST WALK STRAIGHT AHEAD, A LITTLE FASTER UNTIL THE SIGNAL RETURNS.

KEEP GOING, AND YOU SHOULD RUN INTO A BIG NOISY ROOM THAT SMELLS LIKE EMBALMING FLUID JUST HOLD YOUR NOSES AND YOU SHOULD BE OKAY

ARE WE THERE YET?!?

SIGH

UH-HUH.

WOMWOMWOMWOMWOMWOMWOM

YAAAUUGGHH!!!

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JUST LIKE OLD TIMES, RIGHT MY LITTLE SUPER NOVA?

YOU KEEP TELLING ME THAT!

HOO! HOO!

BLEEP!!

HUFF

SO DO YOU HAVE A PLAN, OH FEARLESS LEADER?

HUFF

RIGHT NOW, MY PLAN IS RUNNING FASTER THAN YOU!

AND OF COURSE...

GROOAAN

LET ME GUESS... YOU'RE THE RESCUE PARTY?

BUT WHAT'S THIS?

AND SO THEN THE BLUE LADIES HAD THE PURPLE GUY LAY ON THE TABLE...

AND THERE WERE ALL THESE POINTY MACHINES AROUND, AND HE WAS ALL NOISY..

HE WAS ALL LIKE "OOH NOO! LET ME GOOO!"

YOU KNOW, LIKE HE ALWAYS IS...

AND THEN...

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Oh yes, Mommy missed you too, my widdle sweetie boo!

Who's been a good monster?

Are you ready to help Mommy crush all the little bugs?

GRAAUUUCHHLCHUUUUGH!!

STAY CLOSE, FREEDA.

SO THEN, MR WOBBLES TOLD ME I SHOULD TRY TO GET BACK TO THE SHIP BECAUSE IT WAS ALMOST TIME FOR THE *UNCLE FLOYD* SHOW TO BEGIN.

THAT'S WHEN I FOUND *THIS* PLACE.

BUT NONE OF THESE TVs WORK.

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OH NO YOU DON'T!!

PYOO! PYOO! PYOO! PYOO!

GAAH!

HUH?

WOBBLE!

SWOOSH!

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YAAH!

THIS!SBAD! THIS!SBAD! THIS!SBAD!

HEEELLP!!

HEY UGLY!

YOU WANNA PICK ON A BRAINLESS IDIOT?

TRY PICKIN' ON ME!

OH, JM...

NOT YOU, YEOMAN WAH...

I WAS TALKING ABOUT MR SOC--

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AAH!

CK!!

NO!! COMMANDER!

HEAVE!

WHY DID WE NOT BR NG THAT SHEEP GUY WITH US?

HE BUILT ALL THIS STUFF DIDN'T HE?

CALL HIM!

I'LL GET RIGHT ON THAT, SHALL I?

HEY! HEY!

ARE YOU OKAY?

HLRUBR

DID I EVUH TELL YOU...

...HOW BUCH I WUV STWIPES?

OH.. ISS YOU?

I WAFF ..

I WAFF TWYING TO..

HWUH?

I WOFT A TOOF?

I WOFT A TOOF!

CK, CAN YOU STAND UP?

HOW DO YOU FEEL?

I FEEL..

HEH HEH...

I FEEL LIKE A SPACER!!

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HEY!!
THAT'S QUITE A REVOLTING BEAST YOU GOT THERE!

HERE, LET ME KNOCK IT OFF YOUR BACK!!

You repulsive insect!

ERR CAN I HELP YOU, COMMANDER? NO? OKAY!

YOU'RE IN FOR IT NOOOOOW!!

HE'S REALLY TAKING A BEATING, ACE!

HE'S GIVING US TIME!

YOU GOT'M NOW CK!

UHH, HANG IN THERE!

YOU HAD ENOUGH?

Finish him, my pet

Make it squishy

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Well, "Commander" it was nice knowing you but you're going to have to *die* now

Someone as *pathetic* as you must account for about *half* the galaxy's imperfection alone.

Good bye!

LOCALOCALOCALOOOC!!

KER-STOMP!!

GRAHUGHUGARGLEH!!

NICE OF YOU TO VISIT! I MEAN "DROP IN" ...SHOOT!

SPLAT!

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STOMPA! STOMPA! STOMPA! STOMPA!

TAKE THAT!

AND THAT!

BOOM

COMMANDER! ARE YOU OKAY, YOU STUPID DUMMY?!

why, it's six thirty, young man...

ENOUGH!!

oh it's you, yeoman Wah... that's enough glitter, yeoman... you can... uh... you.

HUH?

THIS IS ALL YOUR CREATION, ISN'T IT? DON'T YOU HAVE A WAY TO SHUT IT DOWN?

COMPUTER. SHUT DOWN THE ZENITH PROJECT!

I REPEAT, SHUT DOWN THE ZENITH PROJECT!

YOU...

YOUR EYES?

nyn nnnn.

I'm going to shred you into little pieces with my own claws. Won't that be fun? heh heh

UM, FORTISCUE?

MY EYES?

YES, COMPUTER! YES! IMMEDIATELY! FORCE QUIT! FORCE QUIT!

YOU LIKE

MY EYES?

BONG

I... er, I...

HRR

GYAHH!

SLUMP

HRYAAUUGH!!

IF YOU DON'T EXPLAIN THIS IN SIXTY SECONDS, I'M GONNA SHUT YOU DOWN.

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NOW I'M SURE YOU ALL HAVE A LOT OF QUESTIONS...

I HAVE ONE OR TWO!!!

AFTER GETTING TRASHED BY THOSE GIANT BLUE FREAKS, I WAKE UP IN SOME TANK WITH THIS COTTON-BRAINED PUFFBALL WATCHING ME LIKE A TELEVISION...

THEN THIS GARGANTUAN MONSTROSITY BREAKS ME OUT AND NEARLY BREAKS MY SPINE...

THEN I COME HERE AND I'M GREETED BY THIS THING, SNUGGLING UP TO THAT... THAT PURPLE MENACE!!

HEY!

BE CAREFUL!

KLUNK!

ARE YOU TRYING TO CRACK HER SKULL?

NOT UNLESS YOU WANT TO TAKE ITS PLACE, G-TIP.

EXPLAIN.

NOW.

A

B

C

BUT I NEVER EVEN HAD AN iKNOW!

IT'S LIKE THIS:

A: THE TEMPLATE, (IN THIS CASE, YOU) IS DETECTED BY THE iKNOW, AND LED TO THE PERFECTICATION CHAMBERS HERE IN THE ORBITING LABORATORY

B: ALL PHYSICAL IMPERFECTIONS ARE DETECTED, AND ALL THOUGHT WAVES ARE TRANSFERRED INTO A CLONE OF THE TEMPLATE.

C: WHILE THE CLONE IS MATURING, MILLIONS OF NANODROIDS ARE BUSY INSIDE, ERADICATING IMPERFECT THOUGHTS AND TRANSFORMING ALL ORGANIC TISSUES INTO A PERFECT ANDROID. WITHIN HOURS, THE GALAXY IS ANOTHER STEP FURTHER TOWARDS PERFECTION.

OH, THEN YOU MUST HAVE BEEN ON SOMEONE'S FRIEND LIST.

WHAT?

THERE'S AN OPT-OUT OPTION IN THE CONTROL PANEL.

DOOOK...

HOW ABOUT I REPLACE YOUR ARM?

OW! OWIE! OWW!

I'LL EVEN WAIVE THE TWO HUNDRED SPACE-BUCKS CONVENIENCE FEE!

IT'S A START!

WAIT... "TEMPLATES?"

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HAVE NO FEAR, SPACERS!
CK IS CONTINUING SOON!
JUST GOTTA PAY SOME BILLS,
SO TO SPEAK!
// LAZY,
// FAT
// HUMAN..

TEMPLATES!!

CK, WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

BLIP! BLIP!

MORRIS? WHAT'S UP?

ACE, IF YOU'VE GOT ANY MEDIA SERVERS IN THERE, YOU MIGHT WANT TO TURN ON THE NEWS...

NOW!

BEEP!

...HOPEFULLY WITH SOME CLUES AS TO THE MYSTERIOUS BLUE TRANSFORMATION OF ALMOST *45 PERCENT* OF THE POPULATION OF THE *ENTIRE GALAXY!*

WELL, THIS IS HAPPENING ACROSS *ALL* SPECIES IN *ALL* SYSTEMS.

THE *ONLY* THING THEY HAVE IN COMMON WAS THAT THEY WERE ALL WEARING *iKNOWS*. BUT I MEAN HOW CAN *THAT* BE DANGEROUS?

WE'LL BE BACK WITH MORE REPORTS AS WORD GETS IN. BACK TO YOU...

GURK!

TSK..

WE GOT *ANOTHER* ONE!

...WHAT?

ONLY *45 PERCENT* MARKET SHARE??

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TEMPLATES! ANDROIDS!

NO WAY!!

THE TEMPLATES OF ALL THOSE ANDROIDS ARE HERE?!?

WELL, OF COURSE THEY'RE HERE.

WHOA WHOA. YOU'RE SAYING 45 PERCENT OF THE ENTIRE GALAXY'S POPULATION IS HERE ON THIS STATION?

WELL, NOT THEIR BODIES! WE KEEP THEIR TRANSPORTER PATTERNS IN THE LAB'S MASSIVE COMPUTER, AND WE CAN JUST REMATERIALIZE THEM ON DEMAND.

BUT WE CAN'T BRING THEM BACK ALL AT ONCE! THIS PLACE WOULD BE FLOODED! IT WOULD BE A MASSIVE DELUGE OF PEOPLE!

A TORRENT, IF YOU WILL.

LISTEN UP, SPACERS...

WE GOT BIGGER PROBLEMS THAN THAT HERE...

LIVE

WE BRING YOU NOW LIVE, TO A GIGANTIC SPACE STATION ORBITING GAZELLE...

ATTENTION ORBITING STATION! THIS IS THE TRIPLE-I!

YOU ARE ORDERED TO DROP YOUR DEFENSES AND SURRENDER!

OOH.

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OKAY TEAM!

WE DON'T HAVE A LOT OF TIME!

?

THERE'S A LOT TO DO, AND WE'VE GOT TO GET IT DONE BEFORE THE TRIPLE-I GETS US.

SO LET'S SPLIT UP!

FORTISCUE! GET MR SOCKS BRAIN AND PUT IT BACK IN THE FERRET.

UH... OKAY!

...AND YOU SAID YOU COULD GET YEOMAN WAH A NEW ARM...

...AND ACTIVATE THOSE DEFENSE MINES AGAIN...

...AND FIND OUT HOW TO KEEP ALL THOSE TEMPLATE FILES SAFE...

...AND MAYBE YOU CAN...

SO BY "SPLIT UP", YOU MEAN "FORTISCUE DO EVERYTHING!"

WELL IT'S YOUR LAB!

COMPUTER...

REACTIVATE ZENITH.

!

!?

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COMPUTER...

REACTIVATE ZENITH...

IN SAFE MODE.

THERE IS ***ABSOLUTELY NOTHING*** TO WORRY ABOUT!

AT HER CORE, ZENITH IS A HELPFUL, INTELLIGENT WORKPLACE ASSISTANT.

BONG

I THINK SHE JUST GOT CAUGHT IN A LOOP WITH THAT WHOLE "***ERADICATE IMPERFECTION THROUGHOUT THE GALAXY***" THING.

...JUST A FEW BUGS TO IRON OUT IS ALL!

YOU!

Have just commited a ***FATAL*** mistake!

mean! Going out in public looking like ***that?*** I would just ***die!***

Did you two lose a fight with a ***lawn mower*** or something?

DON'T GIVE IT ANY ***IDEAS!***

OH ZENITH! YOU ***KILL*** ME.

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BONG ♫♪

GYAH!! THEM!

RELAX. THESE ALPHA DROIDS ARE IN SAFE MODE TOO.

EH... OF COURSE, IT'S JUST YOU NEVER FORGET THE FACES OF THOSE THAT TRIED TO REMOVE YOUR BRAIN!

ZENITH AND THESE DROIDS KNOW THE LAB AS WELL AS I DO.

THEY CAN HELP US ALL GET OUT OF HERE BEFORE THE TRIPLE-I BOARD!

OKAY! SO HERE'S THE PLAN! AGAIN!

ACE! HELP FORTISCUE GET MR SOCKS' BRAIN BACK IN THE RIGHT PLACE!

STOMP! STOMP!

FREEDA! YOU TAKE ONE OF THE ALPHA DROIDS AND REACTIVATE THE DEFENSE SYSTEMS!

MITTENS! YOU TAKE A DROID AND DUMP AS MANY TEMPLATES ONTO THE SHIP'S COMPUTER AS IT'LL HOLD!

You do not *run* fast, do you?

HUFF *WHEEZE*

If you wish, I can replace your legs with a myodraulic neuro-controlled system?

GASP

ZENITH. NIN WAH'S GOING TO NEED A *NEW ARM* IN CASE WE HAVE TO FIGHT OUR WAY OUT OF HERE.

Oh for *fun!* I'll give you a head-to-toe overhaul... er *makeover*

Makeoverhaul! hee hee!

WHAT? *NO WAY* AM I TEAMING UP WITH THIS *PSYCHO DROID.*

WHY CAN'T I GO WITH ACE OR FREEDA?

WHAT MAKES YOU THINK I WANNA TEAM UP WITH *YOU* EITHER!?

RELAX! I'M GOING WITH YOU TOO.

Come on! It'll be fun!

SEE!! LET GO!

AND FLUFFY, I HAVE AN ASSIGNMENT FOR YOU TOO.

ONE I KNOW YOU'LL SUCCEED

YOU SEE, I'VE REACHED AN *EPIPHALY* DURING THE COURSE OF THIS ADVENTURE.

AN EPIPHALY THAT HAS GIVEN ME TRUST IN THE ABILITIES OF THOSE WITH WHOM I SERVE.

FLUFFY, I'VE COME TO REALIZE THAT ONE OF THE MARKS OF A *TRUE* LEADER IS THE ABILITY TO RECOGNIZE THE TALENTS OF HIS SUBORDINATES, AND THE WILLINGNESS NOT TO QUASH THEIR METHODS OR CREATIVITY

I NOW REALIZE THAT *YOUR* GREATEST STRENGTH IS A WAY OF THINKING OUTSIDE THE CONVENTIONS OF REALITY AND APPLYING THEM IN WAYS NONE OF US CAN DREAM OF.

IT'S THAT KIND OF CREATIVITY AND UNPREDICTABILITY THAT WE'RE LUCKY TO BENEFIT FROM.

IN SHORT, YOU ARE AN INTANGIBLE THAT MAKES US STRONG AS A TEAM. AS *SPACERS.*

SO I WANT YOU TO--

gone!

CARRY ON, FLUFFY

CARRY ON.

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Oh *wait!* Before we get you a new arm. We just need *one thing!*

WAIT... WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH THAT??

This will save us a few hours of bioanalyzing and cyber-nerve nanomapping time!

This android already has the neural maps of your skeletal and muscular pathways.

We can just transfer the data from her memory to the cybertronic construction module, rather than reconfigure it from scratch!

GRRR. *FINE!* WHATEVER!

JUST TELL IT TO STAY OUT OF MY WAY!

Oh, *that* won't be a problem.

. . .

We just need her *head!*

OH *SUCK IT UP*, YEOMAN.

YOU RIDE MR SOCKS' TRANSPORTER ENOUGH, AND IT'S BOUND TO HAPPEN FOR *REAL*.

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This is the cyborgomy lab

Be careful of the *sluices* on the floor it used to get pretty messy in here, back in the day

last week

SO... I'M *NOT* THE REAL NIN WAH? BUT I REMEMBER *EVERYTHING!*

EVEN LOSING MY *ARM!*

OH *THIS* SHOULD BE GOOD. HOW DID IT HAPPEN, THEN?

IT WAS A SIMPLE SMUGGLING OPERATION GONE BAD. WE GOT *DOUBLE CROSSED* BY THAT DIRTY BEARCAT AND HAD TO RUN FOR OUR LIVES.

I GOT HIT BY SOME BLAZER FIRE AND GROOTLY GOT ME TO SAFETY...

...*AND* I REMEMBER THAT BIG SCRUMPTIOUS THERATECH, WHOM I HAD TO *LEAVE* TO PROTECT HIM FROM THE TRIPLE-I'S *RELENTLESS* SEARCH!

BUT IT TURNED OUT HE WAS A SPACER *SYMPATHISER* WHO HAD A SECRET HIDEOUT--

...A SECRET HIDEOUT ON GERBIL FOUR! *HA!* THAT'S NOT HOW IT HAPPENED!

THAT'S THE *FAKE* STORY I *MADE UP* TO TELL PEOPLE WHO ASKED!

I mean

um

CAUSE THE *REAL* STORY IS JUST FAR TOO *AMAZING* FOR PEOPLE TO HANDLE!

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I GOTTA ADMIT

I DIDN'T EXPECT SO MANY *COMPUTERS* IN A SURGERY ROOM.

I THOUGHT THERE'D BE .. YOU KNOW *MORE SCALPELS* AND STUFF!

WELL, SCALPELS AND HACKSAWS MIGHT HAVE BEEN FINE FOR YOUR *GRANDPARENTS'* BRAIN TRANSPLANT.

BUT FORTUNATELY FOR THE GALAXY, I HAVE INVENTED MORE *CIVILIZED* AND ELEGANT METHODS OF OPERATING.

JUST A FEW THINGS TO DOUBLE CHECK, THEN WE CAN *FLIP* THESE BRAINS!

GOOD. LET'S NOT BE HERE WHEN THE *TRIPLE-I* COMES KNOCKING.

BLIP BEEP

BLOOD PRESSURE... *CHECK*

LYMPHATIC FLUIDS... *CHECK.*

PROGRAM UPDATES... *CHECK.*

HMMM...

DO WE WANNA LEAVE *FEEDBACK?* WHAT DO YOU THINK... FOUR STARS?

WILL YOU JUST--!!

OKAY! OKAY! ARE YOU READY TO RELEASE ALL MOTOR FUNCTIONS OF THIS BODY MR SOCKS?

IT'S WORTH THE WAIT. *BELIEVE* ME.

I DON'T HAVE AN ELEGANT SOLUTION FOR *THAT.*

S.W.C.

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YEAH, SOCKS' BRAIN IS BACK IN HIS HEAD NOW

ONLY NOW WE'VE GOT THIS GIANT **MONSTER** CARCASS TO DEAL WITH. I'M JUST NOT SURE WE'RE DOING THE RIGHT THING.

YOU'RE NOT GOING ALL *NUMPH* ON ME AGAIN, ARE YOU?

NO, NO IT'S NOT THAT. IT'S JUST...

THIS *ISN'T* AN ANDROID. IT'S MADE UP OF REGULAR *PEOPLE* PARTS.

WHAT WE'RE DOING JUST DOESN'T *FEEL RIGHT.*

"WHAT WE'RE DOING" IS GETTING *OFF* THIS STATION *A.S.A.P.*! IF YOU'RE DONE THERE, *GET GOING!*

sigh YOU'RE RIGHT, STARDUST.

LOOK, I THINK WE'RE **ALL** A LITTLE OUTSIDE OUR COMFORT ZONE ON THIS ONE, ACE.

I'M NOT SURE I CAN TRUST THESE ANDROIDS TO HELP US PAST THE TRIPLE-I.

I could step outside the airlock if you prefer to continue your conversation in private, Miss Spacer

HANG IN THERE, FREEDA. OVER AND OUT.

OKAY, MR SOCKS.

blip

IT LOOKS LIKE THIS IS OUR "PLAN A" AFTER ALL.

HIBLIRBLRIBH!

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OKAY HOW DID YOU LOSE YOUR ARM?

THAT'S NOT IMPORTANT NOW!

SOME KIND OF FREAK SLIDING DOOR MISHAP?

SHUT UP!

Attention spacer Kitty Please respond

This is Alpha droid Olga-6EQJ5

WHAT? WHO?

The Fox android, sir

LM. OKAY

WHERE'S MITTENS? I THOUGHT HE WAS WITH YOU.

WHERE... "huff"

...MOVING SIDEWALK...

"wheeze" ...WHEN...

"gasp" ...NEED ONE??

"puff"

have analyzed your ship computer and there is insufficient space for all the torrent patterns in the lab.

WHAT ABOUT THE VELVET KNIGHT?

am taking *both* spacer ships into consideration.

The spacer Ace's ship can accomodate only 42% of the necessary files

THERE'S GOTTA BE A WAY TO SQUEEZE MORE SPACE OUT OF MY SYSTEMS.

WOULD IT HELP YOU TO DIRECTLY INTERFACE WITH MY SHIP'S AI UNIT?

That would be beneficial.

am on my way

"wheeze" "gasp"

FINALLY!

Come.

We must report to your *ship*.

OH CLUMPS!!

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MORRIS, PLEASE COME .N. WHAT'S YOUR SITUATION?

I'M IN THE VELVET KNIGHT, TRYING TO DELAY THE TRIPLE-I FROM BOARDING.

We're ready for you now!

HUH?

WHAT'RE OUR CHANCES OF SLIPPING OUT OF HERE?

OH, I'D SAY... UMM... ZERO TO NONE!

GYAAH!

YOINK

THEY'RE THICK AS ASTEROIDS OUT HERE! I'M KEEPING THEM BUSY BUT I CAN'T HOLD 'EM OFF FOR LONG!

GET YOUR TAILS OUTTA THERE BEFORE THEY GET MAD AND START FIRING!

[redacted] ON IT, MORRIS.. CK OUT!

ACE, THIS IS CK. COME IN!

ACE? I DIDN'T COPY THAT! PLEASE REPEAT!

TRIPLE-I

HBLKJBLHKLBKHJBLH!

DOOK-DOOK DOOK-OOK-DOOK

I SAID "LOOK OUT BELOW!"

GOOD TO SEE YOU TOO, SOCKS...

FWEEDA? COME IN FWEEDA

ANY WUCK WIFF DOGE DEFENSE MINES?

CK, THESE MINES DON'T EXACTLY HAVE A STUN SETTING.

I DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU, BUT I'D PREFER TO AVOID KILLING ANY TRIPLE-I PILOTS TODAY

AGWEED! KEEP WOOKING!

COME IN, OLGA... DROID ER... WHATSERNAME! HOW'S IT COMING WITH THE COMPUTER STORAGE?

Olga here

FWEEP!

We are still short by 33 percent. We may need to leave some torrents behind

However, your AI does seem to be a bit distracted, and may not be completely dedicated to the task.

/ ANYTHING ELSE //YOU NEED? //JUST ASK!

//WOOO

//HEM //HEM

THE TRIPLE-I IS GETTING CLOSER! WE'VE GOT NO TIME FOR DISTRACTI--

All finished!

Well? How does it feel?

IT FEELS GOOD!

Commander?

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OH, YOU'RE STILL HERE, MITTENS?

HUH... HUH... FUH... HUFF

WUH...

WATER?

MITTENS, I THOUGHT YOU WERE ON BOARD THE SHIP!

I'M ON MY WAY THERE... I JUST NEED A REST.

THIS LAB IS GIGANTIC!

YEAH YEAH, WHATEVER!

WE'RE KINDA BUSY HERE!

FORTY FIVE PERCENT OF THE ENTIRE GALAXY'S POPULATION IS HERE, LOCKED IN TRANSPORTER PATTERN FILES.

WE DON'T HAVE ENOUGH COMPUTER SPACE TO STORE THEM ALL AND ESCAPE BEFORE THE TRIPLE-I BOARD THE LAB.

WHAT DO WE DO??

WHAT'S THE POINT OF TAKING THEM ALL WITH US AT ALL?

WHY DON'T WE JUST LEAVE ALL THE PEOPLE HERE FOR THE TRIPLE-I TO RESCUE?

BECAUSE WE WANT ALL THE CREDIT!!

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MORRIS. COME IN! IF YOU'RE NOT TOO BUSY, SET UP A COMPUTER LINK FROM THE VELVET KNIGHT TO THE LAB.

WE'RE MOVING TO THE LAB'S MAIN COMPUTER TO START TRANSFERRING PEOPLE OUT OF HERE.

COPY THAT, CK.

FREEDA WILL FILL YOU IN ON THE LAB'S DEFENSE SYSTEMS.

YEAH... IT'S PRETTY MUCH... WELL, THERE AREN'T ANY

NOTHING THAT WON'T CAUSE MASSIVE DESTRUCTION ANYWAY.

SORRY.

THAT'S OKAY, FREEDA...

IT LOOKS LIKE THE TRIPLE-I ARE KEEPING THEIR DISTANCE FOR THE MOMENT

PROBABLY WAITING TO SEE WHAT WE DO NOW.

MAYBE THEY THINK WE'VE TAKEN HOSTAGES OR SOMETHING?

THAT'S MY GUESS, ACE. I'D KEEP THE COM LINES OPEN OVER THERE IN CASE THEY WANT TO TALK.

WELL, WHAT IF WE DEPLOYED SOME EMPTY MINES WITH NO WEAPONS ON BOARD?

WOULD THAT HELP YOU?

NO, CK, I'LL BE FINE OUT HERE. JUST HURRY UP AND GET READY TO BLAST OUTTA THERE...

AT THIS POINT, IT'S JUST BEST NOT TO PROVKE TH--

GET BACK HERE, YOU TWO-BYTE BRAINED MENACE!

HUH? MOUSE? WHAT ARE YOU DOING ON OUR SHIP?

OH, MORRIS. HI! I WAS JUST WANDERING AROUND. THOUGHT I'D INTRODUCE MYSELF TO YOUR AI UNIT. HEH! FUNNY STORY, ACTUALLY... YOU SEE --

KRRT

OUR AI?

YOU!!

TRY TO DECOMPILE MY FIREWALL ALGORITHMS, WILL YOU? HOLD STILL, YOU WIND-UP CALCULATOR! I WILL MAKE PUNCH CARDS OUT OF YOU!

WHOA!

ROBOTTA, CALM DOWN! DON'T--

SHWOOSH

FIRE

PEW! PEW! PEW! PEW!

KERBOOM!!

UH, GUYS?

THEY'VE BEEN PROVOKED.

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MITTENS!

WADDLE OVER HERE A SEC, WILL YA?

UH.. YES, COMM

SHUT UP AND PAY ATTENTION... I NEED YOU TO MONITOR THE OPEN CHANNELS OUT THERE.

DO YOU THINK YOU CAN HANDLE THAT?

BECAUSE I KNOW YOU CAN!

SHUT UP!

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COMMANDERKITTY.COM

OKAY... C'MON IN EVERYONE.

WHOOA...

YAHH!

HERE WE ARE THE LAB'S *MAIN COMPUTER!*

ENOUGH SPACE TO STORE THE SOULS OF HALF THE GALAXY

WELL, NOW WE KNOW HOW MANY *SOULS* IT TAKES TO FILL THIS *FLOATING BALL*

BAAH HAAH HAH!

RIGHT! I'M *MONITORING!* I'M *MONITORING!*

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KOOYA! THIS IS ALL COMPUTER STORAGE?

THERE MUST BE UMPTYBAJILLION YATTABUTTS OF STORAGE IN HERE.

WELL, MOST OF THE COMPUTER POWER IN HERE GOES TO OPERATING THE LABOSPHERE

THESE BIG COMPARTMENTS HERE. .

...ARE SUSPENDED ANIMATION CHAMBERS LIKE THE ONE YOUR FRIEND WAS IN. I THINK WE WERE KEEPING THEM AROUND AS SLAVES FOR LATER.

THEIR ANDROID REPLICANTS HAVE BEEN REPLACING THESE TEMPLATES ...ER PEOPLE .. THROUGHOUT THE GALAXY FOR MONTHS NOW.

YOU CAN'T REALLY COMPRESS PEOPLE THE SAME AS COMPUTER FILES.

WE TRIED.

OH, THANK YOU ZENITH.

THIS IS WHERE THE TRANSPORTER FILES ARE KEPT.

THIS IS IT?

MMM...

THIS ONE DRIVE HOLDS HALF THE POPULATION OF THE GALAXY?

YEEESS..?

WHY ARE WE NOT JUST GRABBING IT AND GETTING THE CLUMP OUT OF HERE?!?

AHEM! THIS ISN'T THE PORTABLE VERSION, DUM-DUM! THE PORTABLE DRIVE HAS A BUILT-IN HANDLE!

YOU CAN'T JUST PORT AROUND THE NON-PORTABLE DRIVE.

NEOPHYTE!

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SIGH! IF WE *MUST!*

ZENITH, PLEASE GET A TWO-WHEELER, AND THE TRIPLE-CUSHIONED PORTABLE STATIONARY DRIVE CARRYING CASE.

PICK IT UP. PICK IT UP. PICK IT UP.

...THAT'S THE ONE WITH THE BUILT-IN HANDLE—

HEY!

YOINK!

SOCKS.

CARRY THIS.

YOU CAN JUST *UNPLUG* IT, I GUESS

GEEZ...

NOW IF WE'RE ALL DONE *WASTING OUR TIME* IN THIS FLOATING FURBALL, I SUGGEST WE MAKE SPACE TRACKS!

!

AIN'T *NOTHIN'* GONNA GET BETWEEN ME AND THE *NEAREST EXIT!*

THIS WAY, SPACERS!

COMMANDER!

REWARD!

OH, WAIT A SEC!

...to repeat, among the notable figures discovered missing in recent weeks, have been principal sovereigns from many systems...

...including *princesses* from Planet Tiger, Planet Fox and Planet Rabbit.

Their respective worlds are offering **enormous sums of space money** as rewards for their safe return, *no questions asked.*

Whether their disappearances are connected with the spread of iKnow transformations across the galaxy is of yet, unknown. But it's safe to say whoever rescues these affluent aristocrats is sure to be lavished in space cash and admiration **for the rest of their lives!**

FORTIGCUE?

...ARE THEY..?

OH *THEM?* I BELIEVE THEY'RE ALL IN *THIS* ONE ACTUALLY

THEY'RE HERE??

ZENITH!

RELEASE THE PRINCESSES!

PSSHOOO!!

PUH... PUH... PUH...

PRINCESSES?!

FWOOSH!

THAT I RESCUED?!?

Shutting down...

GYAHH!

BOY THEY'RE REALLY THROWIN' THEMSELVES AT YOU, CK.

WE'RE GOING TO NEED THAT TWO-WHEELER AFTER ALL, PLEASE.

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WAY TO GO, CK! RESCUING THREE PRINCESSES AT ONCE! THAT'S SOME SERIOUS SPACERING THERE!

UH... YEAH, ER...

YUP! HE DID A GOOD JOB, DIDN'T HE, ACE? HE'S GOT THE INSTINCTS OF A TOP-NOTCH SPACER!

OH, BUT JUST LOOK AT YOU, CK! WE CAN'T LET YOU SHOW YOURSELF OFF TO THEM LOOKING LIKE THIS!

HUH?! IS THIS REALLY THE TIME TO BE WORRYING ABOUT MY OUTFIT?

JUST GIVE THAT ZENITH DROID A FEW MINUTES! YOU'LL LOOK LIKE A REAL SPACER! LIKE ME!

H-HANG ON A SEC, GUYS...

MORRIS! COME IN!

ERRGH!

MAKE IT QUICK, CK! I'M DODGIN' A THOUSAND TRIPLE-I SHIPS OUT HERE!

GRAKK!

WILL YOU PLEASE TALK SOME LOGIC INTO YOUR COMRADES?

WE'VE GOT TO SCRAM, BUT THEY'RE SUDDENLY FIXATED ON MY FASHION SENSE!

JUST BECAUSE I RESCUED A FEW PRINCESSES, THEY--

PRINCESSES?

WELL HECK YEAH! YOU'VE GOT TO LOOK YOUR BEST FOR THE DAMSELS IN DISTRESS!

NOTHIN' WORSE THAN SHOWING UP TO COLLECT YOUR REWARDS WHEN YOU LOOK LIKE A MANGY MANDRILL!

ZAP

BOOM!

CRASH!

YOU GO GET YOURSELF GUSSIED UP! I CAN HANDLE THINGS OUT HERE!

PEW PEW!

PFFT... THESE NEW-COMERS. THEY DON'T KNOW HOW IT'S DONE THESE DAYS, DO THEY, ACE?

OH ZENITH, DEAR! ANOTHER CUSTOMER!

BUT THE... WE WERE .. SHOULDN'T WE...

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HMM. NOW'S MY CHANCE TO SHMOOZE IT UP WITH THE VELVET KNIGHTS!

YEAH, GO ON, CK! NOTHIN' LIKE A NEW OUTFIT TO MAKE YOU FEEL LIKE A REAL SPACER!

IT'LL GIVE YOUR REPUTATION A BIG BOOST!

A BIGGER BOOST THAN GETTING OUT *ALIVE*?

GET OFF!

You're next!

AND IT COULDN'T HURT TO KNOCK THAT RIDICULOUS *CAT* DOWN A FEW PEGS, AS WELL!

YEAH, TALK ABOUT *REPUTATION!* I JUST CAN'T STAY OUT OF THE NEWS, LATELY! FIRST THAT BUSINESS ON GAZELLE, AND NOW ALL *THIS!*

AM I *RIGHT*, ACE?

BUT Y'KNOW, I THINK WE WORK PRETTY WELL AS A *TEAM!*

I MEAN, DESPITE THAT PURPLE CAT GETTING IN THE WAY, I THINK WE DID OKAY EH FREEDA?

PSST!

Y'KNOW WHAT HE'D *REALLY* LIKE ON HIS COSTUME?

dress tokes pants off...

TRUST ME!

MAYBE OUR *NEXT* ADVENTURE WILL BE A BIGGER CHALLENGE HUH? BUT *HEY*, SAVING THE GALAXY IS JUST ANOTHER DAY ON THE JOB.

NOTHING SURPRISES A GANG OF WELL-TRAINED SPACERS LIKE *US*, RIGHT GUYS?

SNRRK!

'CEPT MAYBE *THAT!*

YIKES!

Well? What do you think?

MY OPINIONS ARE DIFFICULT TO EXPRESS IN WORDS..

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ARE WE ALL GONNA HAFTA WEAR THAT?

PHEEEET!

My *masterpiece!* What do you think?

IT'S JM... IT'S AN INTERESTING FIRST PASS, ZENITH.

I MUST SAY I'M A BIT *CONFUSED*, Z. IT'S NOT YOUR *BEST* WORK, IS IT?

Wh-- what??

But I did what I was asked with the parameters provided! How did I *not* get it *perfect*?!

HEY, IT'S OKAY! YOU CAN JUST *TRY AGAIN!*

Try AGAIN?!

BZZIT

FZZT..

FRZZT! PFWWOOOOo

Your Zen th unuṁàṡ unexpectedly shut down. Would yó Ḧiẋeto ṡend a erašh report?

I UH... I NUMPHED UP, DIDN'T I?

"SHOULDN'T WE ESCAPE WHILE WE HAVE TIME?", I SAID..

"OH NO.. LET'S PLAY DRESS-UP!", YOU SAID

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CK, WE'RE SORRY. WE DIDN'T MEAN TO MESS THIS UP FOR YOU.

I SHOULD'VE REALIZED THAT EVERY SPACER NEEDS TO BE IN CONTROL OF THEIR OWN STYLE

AND THAT STYLE INCLUDES THEIR MISSIONS.

WE COULD HAVE BEEN OUT OF HERE ALREADY IF WE HAD LISTENED TO YOU, AND NOW--

AW MAN...

NO, ACE. STOP.

IT'S MY FAULT.

I SABOTAGED HIS COSTUME

I SUPPOSE IN A WAY, THAT MEANS I BORKED UP ZENITH'S MAINFRAME, TOO I'M SORRY MR FORTISCUE

I can just y'know, build *another* one, but okay.

Thanks.

I ONLY CAME ALONG TO IMPRESS ACE AND GET INTO THE VELVET KNIGHTS. BUT I SHOULDN'T HAVE BROUGHT *YOU* DOWN IN THE PROCESS.

I'M SORRY CK

CK?

C--

KAYYAA YAAAAAA!!!

WHAT? DID YOU SAY SOMETHING, YEOMAN WAH?

YEEK!

HEY GUYS. I MANAGED TO WRIGGLE OUT OF AN ESCAPE HATCH AND INTO THIS JANITOR CLOSET.

LEAST I *THINK* IT'S A JANITOR CLOSET

BE OUT IN A *SEC!*

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ACE, COME IN. WHAT HAPPENED OVER THERE?

WE'RE GOOD, MORRIS. THE LAB JUST BLEW A FUSE, THAT'S ALL.

SOME FUSE! WHATEVER IT WAS, IT SPOOKED THE TRIPLE-I ENOUGH TO FALL BACK.

HOLD ON...

WHAT IS IT?

ONE OF THEM IS OUT OF CONTROL... IT'S HEADED STRAIGHT FOR ME!

MORRIS?!

SAWOOSH!

?!?

MORRIS!

?

!!

COME IN, MORRIS!

WAS THAT ?

YEAH. SHE DOES THAT.

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I HOPE YOU GUYS AREN'T MAD.

COMPARED TO YOU, I'M JUST A ONE-ARMED ROOKIE.

NONSENSE! WE ALL STRETCH THE TRUTH A LITTLE, OUT HERE IN THE DARK MATTER.

EXCUSE ME, SPACERS...

MORRIS, COME IN!

IT'S JUST.. sigh MAYBE I'VE GOT NO BUSINESS BEING A SPACER AT ALL.

YOU TALK LIKE THERE'S AN INSTRUCTION MANUAL TO STUDY!

LISTEN. I'LL TELL YOU WHAT BEING A SPACER MEANS TO THE VELVET KNIGHTS.

IT'S ALL ABOUT DANGER AND ADVENTURE

TEAMWORK AND FRIENDSHIP

TRUST AND ROMANCE...

..AND DOING WHAT'S RIGHT

YOU DON'T HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL YOU GET ALL THE PIECES...

YOU'RE A SPACER THE MOMENT YOU START YOUR OWN JOURNEY

TRUTH IS, NIN WAH. YOU AND CK ARE JUST LIKE ACE AND ME WHEN WE FIRST GET OUT

WHAT?

OKAY! I GOT THE BACKUP GENERATORS WORKING.

ZHWOOM

I'M BACK, AND READY FOR ACTION! WHAT DID I MISS?

AAH!

GYAH!

HUH? OH, I FOUND THIS EYEPATCH IN A FIRST AID KIT IN THERE

WHADDAYOU THINK? TOO MUCH?

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I DON'T DOUBT YOUR WORD, MORRIS...

BUT IT'S JUST TOO BIZARRE TO BELIEVE!

WHAT'S GOING ON, ACE?

MORRIS SAYS HE SAW YOUR CREWMAN FLUFFY PILOTING A TRIPLE-I SKYFLY!

FLUFFY?

ALONE IN A TRIPLE-I SHIP?

SHE WASN'T ALONE, C.K. THERE WAS A DRONE IN THE COCKPIT WITH HER, BUT SHE WAS DEFINITELY AT THE CONTROLS.

...DARN NEAR TORE THE VELVET KNIGHT A NEW OBSERVATION DECK!

WELL THAT MAKES SENSE.

THOSE DRONES ARE PROGRAMMED TO RELINQUISH COMMAND IN THE PRESENCE OF AN INTELLIGENT LIFE FORM.

...AND FLUFFY, IT WOULD SEEM.

BUT HOW?

I MEAN, ONE DOES NOT SIMPLY COMMANDEER A TRIPLE-I SKYFLY DOCKED IN A TRIPLE-I MEGA CARRIER

FLUFFY DOES.

AND WE DON'T ASK HOW

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LET'S GO LIEUTENANT! NOT FAR TO GO NOW!

HUP TWO! HUP TWO!

COMMANDER! CAN'T I RIDE ON THE CART WITH THE PRINCESSES?

OH, YOU'D LIKE THAT, WOULDN'T YOU?

I'M JUST SO TIRED!

DIG DEEP, MITTENS! YOU'VE GOT YOUR SECOND WIND COMING!

IF YOU WANT TO BE A GOOD SPACER, YOU'VE GOT TO CARRY YOUR OWN WEIGHT!

Y-YOU'RE RIGHT, COMMANDER. N FACT, I THINK I'VE GOT MY SECOND WIND NOW!

THANKS. COMMANDER!

WHAAAT?

OH COME ON IT'S NOT LIKE I USED THE TRANSPORTER TO BEAT YOU TO THE HANGAR.

YOU HAVE A TRANSPORTER?!?

WHOA...

BACKING UP NOW, ZEE.

QUICKLY

CLENCH CLENCH

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HEY, HOLD UP

WHAT'S THAT STRANGLING SOUND?

HEY! WE DON'T CHOKE THE CIVILIANS!

THIS WOOLY LITTLE YARDSTICK HAD A TRANSPORTER ALL THIS TIME!

I GCK!* THOUGHT YOU KNEW!

KNEW!? HOW COULD I KNEW?!

I THOUGHT YOU WORKED HERE!

YOU'RE WEARING A JANITOR'S UNIFORM, RIGHT?

I GOT IT OUT OF ONE OF YOUR CLOSETS, BUT...

IT'S OK, I SHOULD HAVE REALIZED SOONER

WE DON'T MAKE OUR JANITORS WEAR THOSE RIDICULOUS HOODS.

HGH GRRK!!

COME ON, CK!

EVEN IF WE BEAM INTO THE DOCKING BAY, IT'S NO GOOD WE'D STILL NEED A WAY PAST THE TRIPLE-I OUT THERE

THANK YOU, ACE! I KNOW THAT!

WELL THEN, QUIT BLAMING THE LITTLE SHEEP GUY!

YOU DIDN'T MIND IT WHEN HE BUILT YOU YOUR OWN ROBOT PANDA PLAYMATE, DID YOU?!

OH, LOOK WHO'S TALKING, MISS "LET'S PLAY DRESS UP"

GETTING A NEW ARM IS NOT PLAYING "DRESS UP"! NOW, WILL YOU SHUT UP?!

WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE RESCUING THE MILLION-OR-SO PEOPLE ON THIS HARD DRIVE!

AND I SUPPOSE WE JUST WALK THEM RIGHT PAST THE THOUSAND-OR-SO TRIPLE-I SHIP OUT THERE, JUST WAITING TO —

...WAIT A MINUTE...

...ALL THESE PEOPLE!

WE OUTNUMBER THE TRIPLE-I!

BY LIKE A THOUSAND TO ONE!

AND WE HAVE A TRANSPORTER!

...THE DRONES IN THE SKYFLYS!

WE BEAM THE PEOPLE INTO THE DRONE SHIPS!

THE DRONES WILL ALL SHUT DOWN! WE CAN ESCAPE!

CK, WILL THAT WORK?

BY OPAL'S EARS...

WE'LL MAKE IT WORK!

HA HA! YEAH!!

"YOU AND CK ARE JUST LIKE ACE AND ME...

...WHEN WE FIRST SET OUT."

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SERIOUSLY, YOU THINGS?

I TOLD YOU TO GET A BEDSHEET TO COVER HER UP WITH

...AND I GET A HANDKERCHIEF DRAPED KNEE. NICELY DONE.

WELL, WHAT DID YOU EXPECT? IT WAS HARD ENOUGH DOING THIS.

HANDS UP. ANYTHING WITH *FUNCTIONING* ARMS OH THAT'S RIGHT... NONE OF US!

WELL, GET MORE HANKIES THEN AT THIS RATE, WE'LL *NEVER* HIDE THE BODY BEFORE--

OH! *HELLO.*

WE DIDN'T *DO* ANYTHING! ONE MINUTE WE'RE TALKING AND THE NEXT MINUTE, SHE COLLAPSES IN A HEAP.

MOUSE, SHUT UP.

BUT BY THE LOOKS OF THINGS, YOU AND I ARE IN THE SAME SPACE BOAT.

OPEN SEASON ON FOXES OR SOMETHING?

LISTEN, WE CAN WORK THIS OUT IF WE COORDINATE OUR STORIES

MOUSE, **SHUT UP.**

WHAT'S THE CLOSEST THING TO A *SICK BAY* ON THIS SHIP?

I DUNNO .. THE GALLEY?

IT'S GOT FOOD

YOU ALL LIKE FOOD, RIGHT?

SOCKS, TAKE THE PRINCESSES TO THE GALLEY AND SECURE THE DOOR THINGS MIGHT GET ***BUMPY*** IN A FEW MINUTES.

WE'LL KEEP AN EYE ON THEM TIL THEY WAKE UP

SO ANYWAY, LISTEN... IF ANYONE ASKS, IT WAS AN ACCIDENT, RIGHT?

SHE WAS JUST LOOKING FOR A DRINK OF WATER . AN EXPOSED MAINTENANCE PANEL.

MOUSE **SHUT UP.**

BIG ELECTROCUTION. HAPPENS ALL THE TIME.

THEN YOURS COMES ALONG, TRIES TO HELP HER UP AND...

MOUSE...

SHUTTING UP.

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ON THE DOUBLE, NIN WAH.

I'LL GET THE CARGO DOOR OPEN. YOU CAN STOW YOUR SKYFLY ABOARD

GRRNGG GRRNGG GRRNGG

ACTUALLY I THOUGHT I'D TAKE OFF AND CHECK THINGS OUT.

WE WANT TO BE SURE THE DRONES ARE *SHUTTING DOWN*, RIGHT?

BUT *MORRIS* IS STILL OUT THERE. HE CAN REPORT BACK TO US.

OH, I'M SURE HE *COULD* ...

BUT WOULDN'T YOU RATHER IT BE SOMEONE FROM YOUR *OWN* CREW?

COMMANDER?

WHRRR

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YOU WOT?

I SAID WE'RE ABOUT READY FOR A *TEST.*

BUT WITH SO MANY POINTS TRAVELING SO FAST, I'M GONNA NEED ZENITH'S HELP CRUNCHING ALL THE DATA.

WOULD YOU GRAB THAT LAST *CABLE* AND HOOK IT UP?

NO.

...AND EW.

I'LL BE IN THE T-ROOM.

OKAY, READY WHEN *YOU* ARE, FORTLES.

FOR THIS TEST, WE'RE GOING TO BEAM *FLUFFY* FROM THAT SHIP TO YOUR T-PAD.

BUT SHE'S MOVING AT ABOUT *50 SPACE KNOTS.* SO YOU SHOULD ACTIVATE YOUR DE-INERTIALATING INTERQUANTUM ANTICELLERIZER.

YEAH, YEAH!

JM, MAYBE WE SHOULD WAIT FOR MR SOCKS, COMMANDER?

NO. HE'S BUSY.

TRANSPORTERIZE NOW!

KERSHLORNK!

TRANSPORTERIZING COMPLETE.

COMMANDER, DID YOU *GET* HER?

JM, THIS IS LT MITTENS.

YES, HE *GOT* HER.

ABOUT TWO FEET UP HIS *NOSE.* HE GOT HER

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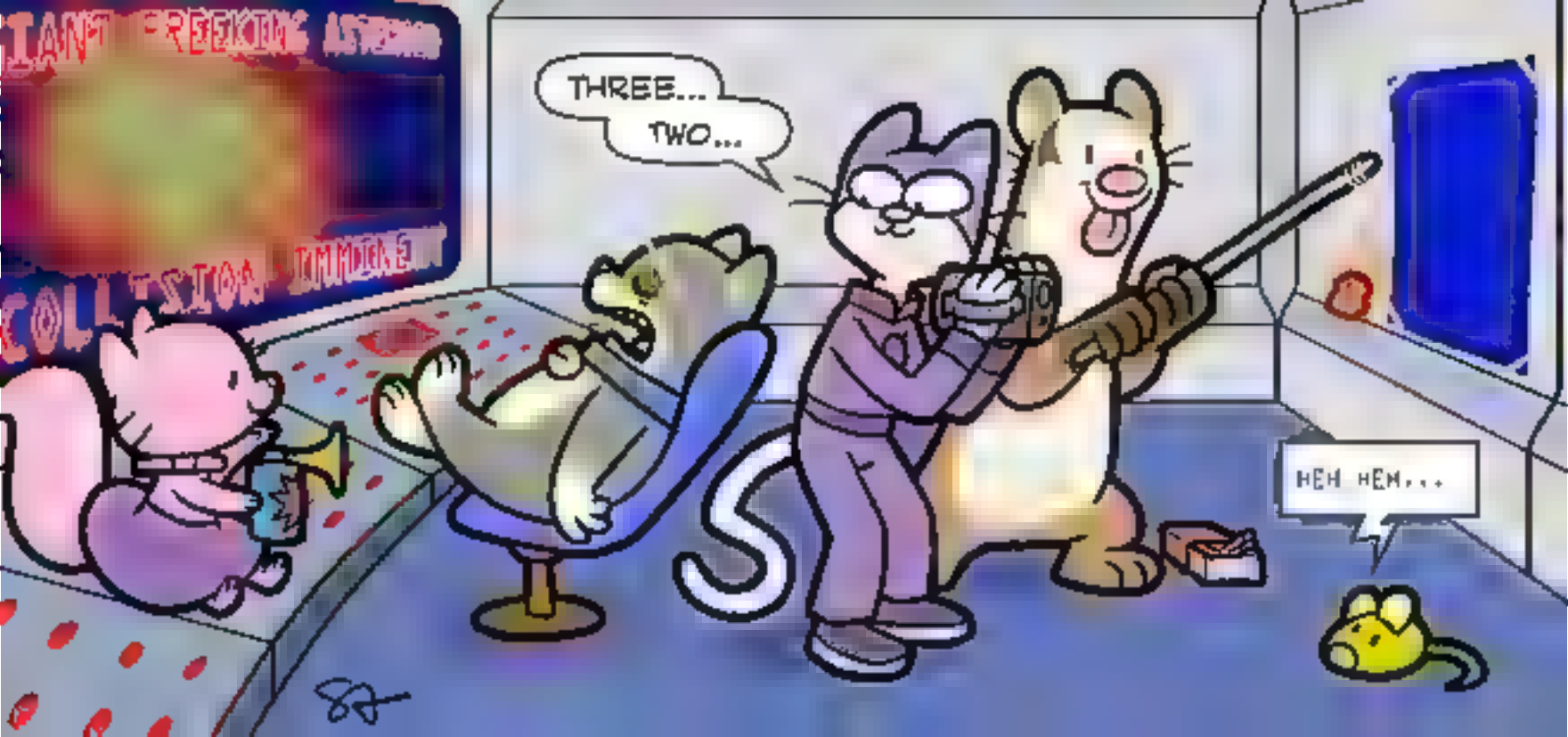
THREE...
TWO...
HEM HEM...

HEY GUYS! LOOK WHAT I FOUND UNDER THE GALLEY SINK!
WE COULD SELL THIS FOR BIG SPACE BUCKS, I'LL BET. WE SHOULD AUTOGRAPH IT
NO WAY! AN ACTUAL PRINT COPY?
OH MAN LOOK AT US! WE LOOK LIKE KITTENS! WHEN WAS THIS?
I THINK IT'S LATE IN THE CYCLE I DROPPED OUT OF-- AHH! WHAT THE CLUMP ARE WE WEARING!?
I REMEMBER USING THAT SHIRT TO PLUG UP A PLASMA CONDUIT NOT LONG AFTER THIS CAME OUT
TSK. WE'VE HAD A LEAKING PLASMA CONDUIT? DID YOU EVER PLAN ON TELLING ME?
SPACEWEEK
ELUSIVE! EXCLUSIVE!
VELVET KNIGHTS
UP & COMING, ROUGH & READY
MORRIS, ACE & FREEDA MEET THEM ALL PAGE 10
MORRIS SHOWS US AROUND THE VK
ACE VS MANDROLLS THE OFFICIAL TALL TALE
LOOK BUT DON'T TOUCH FREEDA'S WEAPON LOCKER
HEY, DIDN'T THEY MAKE UP HALF THE STUFF IN OUR ARSENAL? WHAT WAS UP WITH THAT?
HA! MORRIS, WERE YOU ABOUT TO GO CLUBBING OR SOMETHING??
I HAD JUST COME FROM REPLACING THREE EXHAUST PUMPS. I GRABBED THE CLEANEST THING I HAD!
...HAD NO IDEA WHAT TO DO WITH MY ARMS.
WE DIDN'T MIND WHEN WE LANDED THAT CONTRACT WITH BLACKSTAR BLASTERS, HUH?
OH YEAH! THAT WAS A MISTAKE, HUH?
OH, THOSE OUTFITS.. I'M PUTTING THIS BACK UNDER THE SINK.

A WHAT?

A *FLUFFENDECTOMY.* DON'T WORRY WE RE PREPARED FOR ALL MANNER OF FLUFFY RELATED ACCIDENTS.

TWENTY GRAMS OF BLACK PEPPER! *STAT!*

COME ON, ACE. MORRIS NEEDS OUR HELP ON THE VELVET KNIGHT

IF THE TRANSPORTER IS WORKING, LET'S BEZAP BACK WHERE WE BELONG

YEAH, I JUST HATE TO ABANDON CK LIKE THIS...

ACE...

HE HAS *HIS* SHIP, AND YOU HAVE YOURS, *CAPTAIN.* HE'LL UNDERSTAND

HMM. YOU'RE RIGHT, MY NUMBER ONE.

CLEAR!!

HUWAAH

CHOOGHOO!

PUT IT *THIS* WAY. IF THINGS GO WRONG, I DO *NOT* WANT TO DIE ON *THIS* SHIP

HEH. AGREED.

GEBEN DASS MAN EIN TASCHENTUCH!

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NOBODY HERE. THIS *IS* THEIR T-ROOM, RIGHT?

MAYBE THEY HAD TO HOOK UP THAT DRIVE TO THE SHIP'S SYSTEMS FIRST?

LET'S CHECK HIS COMPUTER ROOM.

YEAH.. GOOD IDEA.

OH HEY, IT'S MR SOCKS!

DOOK...

DOOK...

DOOK...

WHATCHA GOT THERE, SOCKS?

HBLRBLH...

SMELL THAT? THESE CIRCUITS ARE COMPLETELY FRIED UP!

BUT THE HEATLATORS LOOK OKAY, DON'T YOU THINK?

GUYS, *LOOK!*

WHOA... *LOOK* AT EM ALL!

DOOK?!

DOOK?

I'M WILLING TO BET THEY *DID*, SOCKS

THAT ONE'S *SAYING* SOMETHING!

"SAFE MODE?"

HMM...

SOMETHING ABOUT THIS DOESN'T MAKE ME *FEEL* VERY SAFE.

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DOOK DOOK DOOK!

OKAY, SOCKS. YOU SEE WHAT YOU CAN DIAGNOSE FROM THESE MOUSE UNITS. FREEDA AND I WILL HELP OUT CK

BHRBLH!

YOU TOO!

BRRT! BRRT!

FREEDA HERE. MORRIS?

THE PRINCESSES?! WHAT IN THE CRAB NEBULA ARE THEY DOING ON THE VELVET KNIGHT?

GUYS, WHAT'S GOING ON? DID YOU TRANSPORTERIZE A HOVERSKID FULL OF BEAUTIFUL SPACE PRINCESSES OVER HERE?

I DON'T KNOW! THEY JUST MATERIALIZED FZZT!

MORRIS? HEY, COME IN!

SOMETHING JAMMED US!

ACE I'VE GOT A BAD, BAD FEELING ABOUT THIS.

YEAH. ME..

..TOO!?

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AT EASE, LEUTENANT, AT EASE.
MUTTON FACE MUST HAVE HOOKED UP DAT BWUE MENACE TO THE TWANSPORTER BY DOW.
LE'S WHAP UP DIS ADVENTURE ONCE AN' FOR ALL!
GLP!
MITTENS...*SNIFF* ARE WE UNDERWAY LIKE I ORDERED BEFORE SURGERY?
ER... RIGHT AWAY, COMMANDER!
I MEAN... OH! WE ARE UNDERWAY, ACTUALLY
NICE TRY
ER, UHH...
OH LOOK! AN INCOMING COMMUNICATION!
BEEP! BEEP!
HM. IT MUST BE YEOMAN WAH, REPORTING IN.
ACE? ON THE X-FREQS?
NO SIR, IT'S ACE!
ACE, WHAT'RE YOU USING THE EXTERNAL COMM LINE FOR? GET UP TO THE BRIDGE! YOU'LL MISS THE GRAND FINALE!
BLIP!
CK, WHAT'S GOING ON OVER THERE? FREEDA AND I GOT TRANSPORTERIZED BACK TO THE VELVET KNIGHT AND ALL THE PRIN...
THE SIGNAL IS BEING BLOCKED, COMMANDER!
WE'VE LOST IT!
MOUSE ARE YOU ON THE FRIZZLE OR SOMETHING?
WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?
THERe IS NO PROBLeM, COMmANDer.
ZZHHINNG!
EVERYTHING IS WORK ng pERFectly

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HALT!
HALT!
HALT!
HALT!
HALT!
HALT!
OKAY, OUT BABY, *OUT!* YOU DIDN'T MOVE MY SEAT, DID YOU?
IT'S ABOUT *TIME* YOU GUYS GOT BACK! I'M FAKING OUT DRONES BY THE *DOZEN* HERE!
FREEDA! GET THE... UMM... CK'S SHIP BACK ON THE HORN.
...WHATEVER HE'S CALLING IT THESE DAYS!
LOOK LIVELY, CATS! I'M NOT SURE IF THE PLAN IS GOING ACCORDING TO PLAN, HERE.
AYE!
THE TRIPLE-I IS TRYING TO ROUND HIM UP
I *SEE* HIM! HE'S DEPARTING THE LAB NOW
YOU'RE RIGHT, BUT HIS SHIP'S NOT SHOWING UP ON THE EXTERNAL SCANS!
HOW IS THAT—
WHOA!
LOOKIT WHAT'S GOIN' ON *THERE!*
ACE?

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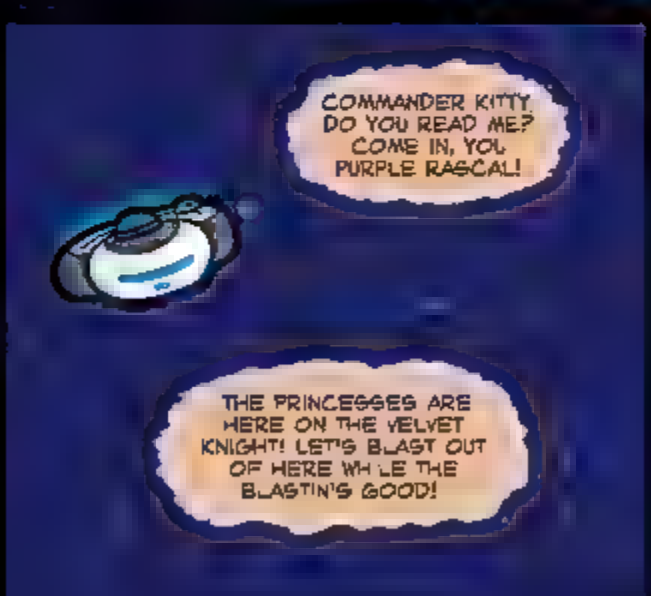
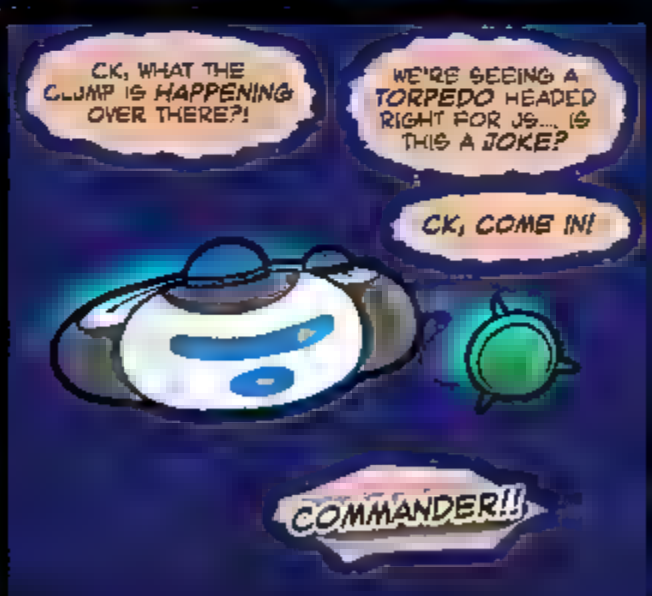
IT SURE WAS!
LOOK!
CK TRANSPORTERIZED THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE INTO THE TRIPLE-I SKYFLYS!
THEY'RE ALL COMING TO A STOP!
KOOYA! THIS IS SPACER HISTORY IN THE MAKING!


COMMANDER KITTY DO YOU READ ME? COME IN, YOU PURPLE RASCAL!
THE PRINCESSES ARE HERE ON THE VELVET KNIGHT! LET'S BLAST OUT OF HERE WHILE THE BLASTIN'S GOOD!



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ALL OF THEM? DEAD?

REGRETFULLY, YES.

Zenith...

YOUR GROUP WAS ONLY TARGETED TO HARVEST THE MOOSE'S PERFECT ANTLERS. THE OTHER TWO WERE USED FOR SPARE PARTS.

I WAS... I MEAN *YOU* WERE OF NO USE TO ZENITH. DUE TO YOUR *IMPERFECTION.*

I CAN LOCATE THEIR REMAINS IF YOU WISH TO COLLECT THEM. THEY'RE KINDA *SCATTERED* AROUND THE ASSEMBLY LAB, THOUGH...

NO... NO MORE.

I'LL *KILL* THEM.

THAT TWISTED ANDROID, *AND* THAT MISERABLE LITTLE SHEEP

I'LL *RIP* THEIR RESPECTIVE *GUTS* OUT WITH MY *BARE HANDS*, AND *STRANGLE* —

TAKE ME WITH YOU?

GRRRR!

POOF

IS THERE A JM... *TOTE BAG*, OR A PAIR OF *TONGS* OR SOMETHING?

REAL HARDCORE, HON.

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N-NO, I'M OKAY. I'M JUST A LITTLE *FUZZED OUT* IS ALL.

WHY DIDN'T YOU SHUT DOWN WHEN I WOKE UP LIKE THE OTHER ALPHA DROIDS DID?

I DON'T KNOW.

THIS HAS BEEN A *CRAZY DAY*, Y'KNOW?

OKAY. OKAY... WE GOTTA GET OUT OF HERE.

HOLD ON.

DON'T MOVE.

KEEP STILL.

YOU KNOW, I CAN'T ACTUALLY. OH NEVER MIND.

HUH-HANG ON. OKAY? THERE'S GOTTA BE A *STICK* OR A *BLANKET* OR SOMETHING AROUND HERE.

SIGH... I HAVE A *BETTER* SOLUTION.

O-OH?

I'M RIGHT BEHIND YOU.

WHAT?

JUST MOVE ASIDE, PLEASE.

TAP

I WAS *TRYING* TO *TELL* YOU!

ANDROIDS!!

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WHAT'S WITH THE *ATTITUDE?* I'M NOT GONNA ATTACK ANYONE. I'M JUST AN ANDROID COPY OF YOU.

DON'T *REMIND* ME! JUST STAY ON YOUR SIDE, AND DON'T TOUCH ANYTHING.

"DON'T TOUCH?!" WHY, I FLEW *CIRCLES* AROUND A FLEET OF KOMODO SPEEDERS BACK IN--

NO YOU DIDN'T. THAT'S *ANOTHER* SPACER STORY I MADE UP.

YOU MIGHT KNOW A *LOT* ABOUT ME BUT YOU DON'T KNOW THE *TRUTH!*

ZIZ-ZIZ-ZIZ-

AND I'LL *THANK* YOU TO KEEP YOUR *MOUTH* SHUT ABOUT--

LOOK OUT!

SPACE SCREECH!

WHAT THE...?

THESE TRIPLE-I SHIPS ARE ALL PILOTED BY *CIVILIANS!*

FRITH IN A RICKSHAW! OUR PLAN *WORKED!*

WE GOTTA BOOK IT *OUTTA* HERE BEFORE THEY REGAIN CONTROL!

I'LL TRY TO FIND CK ON THE SCANNERS!

NO! TRY TO LOCATE THE VEL-

BONK!

HEY! WATCH WHERE YOU'RE GOING.

SORRY, SPACERS.

...I'L *HELP?*

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COME IN ACE!

MY NAME IS—

ACE, WHAT HAPPENED OUT HERE? ARE YOU ALL OKAY? WHERE'S CK?

NIN WAH? I THOUGHT YOU WERE DOCKED ON CK'S SHIP BUT I SEE YOU WENT BACK TO GET YOUR FRIEND THERE.

"WHERE'S CK." THAT'S A GOOD QUESTION!

HE THREW A TORPEDO RIGHT AT JB!

LOST OUR MAIN ENGINE AND STARBOARD ATMOGLIDER...

...OUR PSEUDOGRAV IS OFFLINE AND OUR NAV COMPUTERS ARE BORKED.

...AND IF I HAD KNOWN I WAS GOING SPACE WALKING TODAY, I WOULD'VE PACKED A LARGER SUIT!

WE HAD JUST ENOUGH TIME TO SUIT UP BEFORE THE BRIDGE HULL BREACHED.

CK BLASTED OFF. AND WE HAVEN'T GOT A SNIFF WHERE HE IS.

ACTUALLY, I KNOW WHERE HE IS.

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WHEN THEY SET UP THE JAMMING SIGNAL, THEY INADVERTENTLY CUT OFF THE LINK BETWEEN ME AND THE OTHER MOUSE UNITS.

BUT NOT BEFORE I GOT THEIR FLIGHT PATH.

ZENITH TAPPED INTO OUR NETWORK THE FIRST TIME SHE [illegible] ABOARD, AND LEFT BEHIND A RESIDUAL VIRUS.

THE VIRUS HOOKED ITSELF UP TO THE TRANSPORTER. THE FIRST TIME IT [illegible]

BUT AT THE COST OF FRYING ALL MY UNITS ONBOARD, EXCEPT THE ONE SHE FINALLY TOOK OVER.

LOCK

DO NOT OPEN

THAT SHEEP GUY IS PROBABLY BORKED UP BY NOW, TOO.

I WAS ABLE TO OVERRIDE HER COMMANDS.

CK DIDN'T FIRE THAT TORPEDO IT WAS ZENITH.

I DID EVERYTHING I COULD TO STOP HER.

BUT IT WAS TOO MUCH.

THERE'S ONE OF ME OVER THERE UNDER HER COMMAND.

HOW DO I KNOW YOU'RE NOT MALFUNCTIONING TOO?

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

I JUST SACRIFICED MYSELF NUMEROUS TIMES TO SAVE CK

OF COURSE I'M ON THE FRITZ

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FOLLOWING CK'S TRA...

OKAY, MOUSE. WHAT'S OUR ETA?

3 2 SPACE HOURS

HOW CLOSE CAN WE GET BEFORE THEY DETECT JS?

4 113 SPACE JNITS

ANYTHING OF INTEREST IN THAT SECTOR?

99 44 OVER ONE HUNDRED PERCENT ABSOLUTE SPACE BUPKIS.

TSK. WE NEED A *PLAN.*

YOU'D THINK THE TRIPLE-I WOULD PUT MORE *FIREPOWER* IN THESE SKYFLYS.

FIREPOWER? WHAT'S YOUR PLAN, TO BLOW THEM UP?

HEH! NO, OF *COURSE* NOT!

AHEM. "SARCASM MODE DETECTED."

GIRL, YOU'RE TALKING TO TWO ARTIFICIAL LIFE FORMS. AND EVEN WE KNOW THAT'S COLD.

WE'VE GOT 3 15 SPACE HOURS LEFT TO COME UP WITH A BETTER IDEA!

I'M THINKING!

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DANGER
DANGER
MONITOR RESTORE

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GET BEHIND IT!
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COMMANDER KITTY AND PATREON

A LOVELY COUPLE

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HEY!

WHAT'RE YOU LOOK NG AT?

I CAN'T SEE!

DOOK! DOOK!! HBLRUHBRLH!

BWAH HAHAHA!!

OH MITTENS, YOU KNUCKLEKNOB!

I STILL DON'T GET THIS STRIP...

PATREON SUPPORTERS GET TO SEE THE COMIC A WHOLE WEEK EARLY, BOSS!

WON'T YOU *PLEEEASE* SUPPORT *COMMANDER KITTY?*

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MEANWHILE, IN DEEP SPACE...

GHUUGGH... HWUH...

WHAT THE CHUMP JUST HAPPENED?

HOW LONG HAVE I BEEN OUT?!

SOCKS?

MITTENS?

LIEUTENANT! GET UP! I NEED A DAMAGE REPORT! C'MON! TIME FOR SOME REAL SPACER STUFF!

tabla lessons?

LIFE SUPPORT IS AT 80 PERCENT.

POSITIONAL COMPUTERS ARE OFF...

HUH? I'M GETTING READINGS OF A TORPEDO LAUNCH!

MITTENS, DID YOU LAUNCH A TORPEDO?

OKAY! OKAY!

I LAUNCHED A TORPEDO, AWRIGHT? MAYBE WHILE I WAS LYING UNCONSCIOUS ON THE DECK FOR WHO KNOWS HOW LONG, I WENT AND LAUNCHED A BIG OL' TORPEDO!

JUST CALL ME "MITTENS THE TORPEDO LAUNCHER!"

WHAT?

MITTENS, THIS IS SERIOUS. I ONLY ASKED IF YOU.. "sniff sniff" WHAT IS THAT ? "sniff"

BURNING WIRE CASINGS? LEAKING HYDROGEN SULPHIDE TANK?

HURRF!

OH FOR *ack!* FRITH'S SAKE MITTENS!

BEAM IT INTO SPACE NEXT TIME, WILL YA?!

OH... YOU MEANT A REAL TORPEDO.

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MOUSE, DIVERT ALL POWER TO CEILING FANS! OH, THAT'S RIGHT. YOU'RE ALL... WHAT IS YOUR DEAL ANYWAY?

don't you GET //it?

you vE LOst, you paTHEtic MEAT Bra.Ns. I con//TROL thiS SH.p, and Zenith cONtro.s ME

.t may not be as powerfu. as th//e labOSphere, buT it's more than enOuGh TO wipE //Out alL IMPERfE(tION THROUghout the ga.//aXY ALL you NEED is thE RIGHt plAn.

the PERFECT p.an

wHIch Zenith has

bE(A//use she's perfect

WHAT? SHE COULDN'T HAVE CORRUPTED ALL YOUR UNITS!

thE wOrd .s "(O//rrected". anD ALL the other MOu//SE unITS ARe desTROYed

Zenith s new p.AN IS so simp//.E, she ONLY NEEDS ONE SHIP ANd all yOU Cats are JuSt wast/ iNG Space.

WH..WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?!?

WHAT am I go../.ng to do? I'm going to enjoY WATching your kind being WIPED Out of exist//ence I m going to RECORD it For THE EnJOYment of my Perfect Master I'm going to *delight in* every *nanosecond* of your *inevitable crushing defeat!!!*

COMMANDER KITTY

THAT FELT *REALLY GOOD*. KINDA WISH I *DID* RECORD THAT.

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BRIDGE TO MR SOCKS!

FZZZT!

SOCKS! COME IN!

FRZT!

TSK. THE COMLINE IS DEAD.

TWEEDOO

...AAAND THERE GOES THE MAIN POWER LINK.

DANG IT! WITH MOUSE GONE, JUST ABOUT EVERYTHING'S ON RESERVE ENERGY NOW.

MITTENS. GO CHECK ON THE SHEEP GUY AND HIS PET PSYCHODROID.

ME?

B-B-BUT WHO'S GOING TO STEER THE SHIP?

NO ONE'S GOING TO STEER BECAUSE THE ENGINES HAVE CUT OUT WE'RE DEAD IN SPACE!

BESIDES, I HAVE TO GO FIND SOCKS TO FIX THE COMLINE.

REPORT BACK IN FIVE MINUTES!

GULP!

AND YES, THE FREEZER IS ON RESERVE, SO ALL THE ICE CREAM IS NOT GOING TO MELT!

UH...

HEH!

AYE AYE!

DON'T FORGET' YOU LOBBIED ME FOR THAT!

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HELLO?

MR FORTISCUE?

COMMANDER ASKED ME TO CHECK UP ON YOU GUYS?

IS EVERYTHING OKAY?

I'M SEEING A LOT OF LOOSE CABLES HANGING FROM THE OVERHEAD

AND ACROSS THE FLOOR... THAT'S DANGEROUS! WE WOULDN'T WANT TO TRIP AND FALL!

THESE CRITICAL SYSTEMS PANELS HAVE BEEN LEFT OPEN. THOUGHT YOU SHOULD KNOW!

OH, AND OUR A.I. UNITS HAVE BEEN ACTING REALLY WEIRD!

IT WAS STARTING TO SOUND LIKE MS ZENITH.... BEFORE YOU FIXED HER, I MEAN.

Welcome

AH, THERE YOU ARE!

COMMANDER SMASHED IT WITH A BAG OF FROZEN BROCCOLI, SO IT SHOULDN'T BOTHER YOU NOW.

Our Perfect Master Zenith will help you

Hold still

AHH! RUN, MR FORTISCUE, RUN! I DON'T THINK IT'S SAFE IN HERE!

WOM WOM WOM

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Separation is complete. The neural energy is now free of the corporeal matter.

I can feel my connection with this vessel growing with each nanosecond.

You will continue to expunge this ship of its living material and send the energy to me.

Yes. Master

HEY!! FLOATING SHEEP GUY!

What?

GET READY FOR ME TO LAY THE SMACKDOWN ON YOUR FLEECY HINDQUARTERS! POOL CUE PRINCESS GONNA RACK YOU UP AND BREAK YOU DOWN, MEATBALL!

What?

LOGALOGGALOGALOGGA

PAOO PAOO

BEAP.

SWOOSH

Hrrm.

I fully expected this one to leave a comical impression of itself on the deckplate upon impact

IMPERFECT INSECT!

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Master, did the separation succeed?

Of course.

Continue.

Don't look so glum, Fortescue. Your plan was ambitious, but backwards.

You were right in creating me, but you could not comprehend true perfection because of your physical limitations.

Bodies, both organic and synthetic are inherently imperfect. The need to sustain them only leads to imperfect decisions.

With this, I will separate the brain energy from the body. Only the neural energy is needed.

And here in this drive, all their needs are met. Their existence will be sheltered from this physical universe.

Yes, Master

You will be here to oversee this universe and guide its imperfect population to this paradise.

Master, can this pathetic Sheep body do this alone?

Worry not.

You will have help soon.

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OKAY YOU ROBOTS, WE'RE IN CLOSE SENSOR RANGE OF CK'S SHIP.

STEP ONE IS TO GET ABOARD SOMEHOW.

I CAN'T CONNECT TO THE TRANSPORTER SYSTEM.

AND COMMUNICATIONS SEEM TO BE *COMPLETELY* CUT OFF.

JUST GREAT! HOW'M I S'POSED TO GET IN THERE AND EXACT MY FEARSOME REVENGE!?

APPROACH THE STERN OF THE CAT SHIP AND THE CARGO BAY DOOR WILL BE OPEN.

PERHAPS.

I SERIOUSLY DOUBT IT, BUT I'LL TAKE A LOOK.

ZIP

WELL WHADDYAKNOW?

YOU'RE A REGULAR GOOD LUCK CHARM, YOU KNOW THAT?

FROM HERE ON, IT'S A PERSONAL THING I GOTTA DO. THAT ZENITH NEEDS TO BE SHUT DOWN *PERMANENTLY*

IF YOU'RE NOT UP FOR IT...

I WILL STAY OUT OF YOUR WAY.

THAT'S COOL. AND THANKS FOR YOUR HELP GETTING ME THIS FAR.

KINDA HARD TO KNOW WHO TO *TRUST* LATELY, Y'KNOW?

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DOOK! DOOK!

SOCKS, WHAT ARE YOU DOING? THE MOUSE SYSTEM WAS SABOTAGING THE SHIP!

I DON'T WANT MORE OF THEM.

I MEAN, LOOK AT THIS PLACE!

I SWEAR, THE SHIP IS GAINING SENTIENCE IT'S OUT TO GET US!

HI GUYS!

THERE'S ONLY ONE ANSWER TO THIS PROBLEM, AND IT'S CALLED "VAPORIZING A CRAZY BLUE ANDROID AND HER CRAZY SHEEP INVENTOR"

!

WE NEED TO BE ON THE SAME PAGE MR SOCKS. I DON'T WANT ANY MORE SURPRISES.

HEY! YOU~~

WOOP

WHAT DID I JUST SAY, YEOMAN!?

GYAAGH!

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...AND WHERE HAVE *YOU* BEEN? COME BACK TO HELP ZENITH FINISH US OFF?

WELL THAT ANSWERS MY QUESTION! YOU'RE COMPLETELY *MENTAL!!*

THIS IS FOR THE *VELVET KNIGHT!*

COLLABORATOR!!

I *NEVER* FIRED AT THE VK. IN CASE YOU HADN'T NOTICED, THIS SHIP IS NOT IN MY CONTROL!

YOU COULDN'T CONTROL A *TV REMOTE*, LET ALONE A *SPACESHIP!*

MR SOCKS, I DON'T WANNA HURT YOU, BUT IF YOU DON'T PUT ME DOWN--!

GKRAHHAGGHH!!

BOFF!

!

CLONK!

BONK!

Forgive the interruption.

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...but I'm just so excited for you to be a part of my Perfect world in here.

YOU FIRED ON THE VK! I'D RATHER SEND THIS SHIP INTO A BLACK HOLE THAN LET YOU TAKE IT OVER!

Commander, I have no wish to harm you or your ship. I only want your company.

OH YOU'RE GETTING COMPANY ALL RIGHT! AND I THINK THEY'RE MORE THAN CAPABLE OF PULLING OUT A FEW PLUGS!

LIEUTENANT MITTENS! OFFICER FLUFFY! GET TO THE COMPUTER ROOM AND—

Please, Commander.

They are already here...

They're waiting for you.

You really will enjoy it here. I want everyone to know the bliss and tranquility...

...of living in a Perfect World.

DOOK DOOK

MOM MOM MOM

UH...

He knows now

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DOOOOOK DOOOOOK

SOCKS? IS THAT YOU?

Yeah, it's him.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO HIM!?

I continue to be impressed by your ferret friend's cerebral abilities.

But no matter. The adaptations I made to this transporter are more than capable of filtering...

the mental...

DOOOOOK

from the physical.

DOOOOOK

AND YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING TO HACK INTO EVERY TRANSPORTER IN THE GALAXY?

DOOK DOOK? HMM...

We just need *this* one it's special.

The Commander here bought it from me in an online auction recently

COLLABO-RATOR!!!

OH, WHAAAAT?

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THAT TRANSPORTER I BOUGHT WAS YOURS?!

Yes. And all our products have untracable backdoor remote access.

WAIT A SEC! HOW DID YOU GET SUCH A GOOD ONLINE AUCTION RATING?

We were testing the Know software with our auction stuff

Zenith seemed to have a relapse once I hooked her up to your computers.

Good thing I ignored it!

ENOUGH!

WELL THAT FIGURES

Yeah. Helps with investors too.

VRRT! VRRT!

Mine control. Gotta love it.

THIS IS FOR GROOTLY AND THE OTHERS!!

FWEEE

NIN WAH LISTEN! MR SOCKS HAS A PLAN!

WE JUST HAVE TO PLAY IT COOL FOR NOW!

If you're quite done causing a scene...

I will send you to your new Perfect Home.

I HAVEN'T BEGUN TO CAUSE A SCENE!!

You, of course, misunderstand me, Red Panda. You are NOT welcome. You will remain here.

I... WHAT NOW?

Your task is to assist Fortiscue dispose of the empty physical bodies that will be sure to accumulate.

SWOOSH!

Hiya partner!

NOT ON YOUR MISERABLE ARTIFICIAL LIFE!!

UH OH.

UNNG!!

BONK

WEAK LOB!

DUDE

NOT REALLY YOUR THROWING ARM, IS IT?

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WAS THIS YOUR PLAN? "GET CAPTURED AND LET HER BEAM YOUR NEURAL ENERGY INTO THE HARD DRIVE?"
The transporter will be ready in ten seconds. It would amuse me to hear your last words, Cat.
TOO BAD, ZENITH. MY LAST WORDS ARE FOR YEO--
. . . FOR NIN WAH.
Uu
!?
Enough of this...
This galaxy is mine.
Yours is ready for you now. Shall we get started?
WOM WOM WOM WOM WOM

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GAAH!

WOM WOM WOM

Absorption complete.

Beginning neural filtration.

The *parrots* will remove this refuse from the ship at once.

Hmm...

Fortiscue. Increase cohesion parameters fifteen percent.

Yes, my most perfect pedagogue.

WOM

WRRM

VRRU

WHAT?

Fortiscue! I said *fifteen* percent!

er yes, Master! Entirely my own wretched fault!

MR SOCKS' PLAN!

JUST LIKE CK *SAID* WOULD HAPPEN!

IF THE *REST* OF WHAT HE SAID IS TRUE, HIS HEAD MUST BE SOMEWHERE ON THE *SHIP!*

BLOP

I KNOW WHAT I MUST DO

...AND EWW.

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The neural energy transfer is... complete.

Yeah, but THIS Yecch!

WHRRR... WHRR

It is inconsequential. Find the body and dispose of it. Along with the rest of his crew.

You heard her, lower life form! Scour this ship and dump all those bodies!

That little *fat* one is starting to let off steam.

BUT... CAN I GET MY ARM BACK?

Well lemme think about it for a sec--*NO!* Can you maybe *shut up* and get to work?!

I HOPE YOU'RE OKAY IN THERE, CK.

I CAN'T IMAGINE WHAT IT'S LIKE LIVING AS PURE COMPUTER DATA...

...IN THIS MONSTER'S IDEA OF A PERFECT WORLD...

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WELCOME!

GUUH... WHAT HAPPENED?

WELCOME!

WELCOME!

...LAST THING I REMEMBER...

ZENITH WAS GONNA SHUNK ME INTO THE DRIVE...

I FEEL... WEIRD...

NIN WAH?

WELCOME!

YAAAGGHH!!!

WHAT IN THE GALAXY IS THIS PLACE?

WELCOME TO THE DRIVE, MAYOR!

...AND WHY ARE MY EYES FROZEN TO THE LEFT?!

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H'OOOKAY...

SOMEONE WANNA TELL ME WHAT KINDA *TWISTED* HOLODECK PROGRAM THIS IS SUPPOSED TO---

BWOOOAAA!!

SHWOOP!

GAH! EASY ON THE *GRABBING*, AWRIGHT? MY HEAD ALREADY FEELS LIKE A WORMHOLE!

MR SOCKS??

IS THAT *YOU*?!

DOOK.

BOING!

WHAT'S THAT?

YOU'VE DESIGNED A DEVICE TO GET US ALL OUT OF THE DRIVE AND YOU JUST NEED ME TO ORDER THESE PEOPLE TO CREATE IT?

...AND YOU'RE ALSO SEARCHING FOR A WEAPON TO DESTROY ZENITH ONCE AND FOR ALL ONCE WE ESCAPE??

DOOK.

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CLUMP, MITTENS .. ANYTHING, THE FOOD MUST BE GOOD ON THIS SHIP!

HUFF

EITHER THAT OR NO ONE ELSE GETS ANYTHING TO EAT WITH YOU ON BOARD!

BEEP?

HUFF

WORKING HARD!

FIRST BATCH READY FOR THE DUMP!

HUFF

..DON'T SUPPOSE I CAN GET THAT CYBER ARM BACK?

I suffer just allowing you to live.

LEAVING!

THINK, NIN WAH! THINK!

THERE MUST BE SOMETHING TO GIVE ME AN EDGE!

THE HANGAR...

HANG ON...

HANGAR ➡

⬅ DISPOSALS

MAYBE IT WON'T NOTICE IF I MAKE A LITTLE DETOUR.

WEIRD. IT LOOKS LIKE THIS BAY HASN'T BEEN AFFECTED.

MAYBE THAT CLONE DROID KNOWS A THING OR TWO ABOUT FIGHTING ZENITH.

AT LEAST I COULD USE THE SKYFLY'S SCANNERS TO LOOK FOR CK'S BODY

OH GEEZ..

I HOPE YOU JUST NEED A REBOOT!

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SOCKS, YOU SAID YOU WERE DESPERATELY LOOKING FOR A WEAPON, BUT ALL I'VE SEEN IS YOU *SHAKING TREES*!

RUSTLE RUSTLE

HAVE YOU OFFICIALLY POPPED YOUR CORK?

MAYOR! YOU'RE FINALLY HERE!

MAYOR? THAT'S "COMMANDER" TO YOU, LIEUTENANT!

YOU HAVE TO FOLLOW ME TO THE TOWN HALL! THERE'S NO TIME TO LOSE!

HELLO MAYOR! WILL YOU BRING ME AN ORANGE?

OH MAYOR: CATCH A BUTTERFLY FOR ME, PLEASE?

IT'S *TERRIBLE* MAYOR! NO ONE WANTS TO LEAVE THE DRIVE BECAUSE THEY EXPECT *US* TO DO EVERYTHING *FOR* THEM!

IT'S ZENITH'S SICK, TWISTED VISION OF PARADISE. AND SHE SAVED THE WORST ROLE FOR *ME* TO PLAY!

HE'S HERE. THE MAYOR IS READY TO GET THE PROJECT UNDERWAY!

HELLO, MAYOR! WE'RE SO HAPPY YOU'RE FINALLY HERE!

YOU??

SHE'S ON *OUR* SIDE, MAYOR!

STAY ON GUARD, MITTENS. THAT SWEET SMILE IS ON A *BLUE* FACE.

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IS THERE SOMETHING I CAN HELP YOU WITH TODAY?

ARE WE SURE WE CAN TRUST THIS ALPHA DROID, LIEUTENANT?

SHE'S BEEN OUR LINK TO THE OUTSIDE, MAYOR!

SHE HELPED MR SOCKS SABOTAGE THE TRANSPORTER AS YOU GOT SENT IN!

OKAY, LET'S GET THIS STARTED...

DO YOU WANT TO MAKE A NEW TOWN FLAG?

...WHAT? NO.

DO YOU WANT TO COMPOSE A TOWN ANTHEM?

NO!

DO YOU WANT---

WHAT! I! WANT! IS FOR YOU TO START CONSTRUCTION ON THE TRANSDIGITAL PORTAL ARRAY THAT MY CHIEF ENGINEER SUPPOSEDLY GAVE YOU DESIGNS FOR, IN-BETWEEN SESSIONS OF SHAKING TREES AND DIGGING IN THE MUD!!

DO YOU THINK YOU CAN MANAGE THAT??

OOOOHHHHH...

COULD YOU REPEAT THAT WHILE SITTING IN THAT CHAIR?

CURSE YOU, ZENITH!

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OKAY?! DID YOU GET ALL THAT OR DO YOU WANT ME TO WEAR A PAIR OF **DEER ANTLERS** OR SOMETHING??

THANK YOU, MAYOR!

THE **TRANSDIGITAL PORTAL ARRAY** WILL BE FINISHED FIRST THING IN THE MORNING!

IS SOMETHING WRONG, MAYOR?

IT'S LIKE THIS, LIEUTENANT

ONCE WE HAVE EVERYTHING READY, I WANT TO MOVE **FAST** AND TAKE ZENITH BY SURPRISE.

AND I DON'T WANT **NIN WAH** IN THE LINE OF FIRE.

WE NEED A WAY OF **CONTACTING** HER AND TELLING HER THE PLAN!

I MAY BE ABLE TO **HELP** THERE, MAYOR.

IN FACT, WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO COMMUNICATE WITH HER...

..ANY MOMENT NOW.

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HEY...

HEY!

ARE YOU... FUNCTIONAL?

...BECAUSE I COULD REALLY USE AN EXTRA HAND HERE!

?

FLIP

TAKE IT

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"TAKE IT"?

DO YOU MEAN YOUR ARM?

DID YOU KNOW YOU WERE GOING TO GET BRICKED BY COMING HERE?

MAYBE I MISJUDGED YOU, KID. YOU NEVER ASKED TO GET MIXED UP IN THIS

POOR DUMB CLONE DROID. I NEVER EVEN ASKED YOUR NAME OR ANYTHING.

I'M ALWAYS "BLAST FIRST ASK QUESTIONS LATER." I DON'T DESERVE FRIENDS LIKE YOU. ACE AND FREEDA. EVEN CK, I GUESS.

WHAT RIGHT DO I HAVE TO TAKE YOUR ARM?

MOMENTS LATER.

HEY, THAT CAME OFF SURPRISINGLY EASY!

OKAY!

HERE GOES NOTHIN'!

CLANK

WRRRT-WRRT

GEEZ...

IF I COULD TAKE BACK ONE STUPID THING IN MY LIFE...

I WOULD NOT HAVE RIPPED THE SLEEVE OFF THIS JACKET

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OOH! I CAN FEEL IT BOOTING UP...

WOW, IT'S SO NATURAL!

NO GADGETS, NO TRANSFORMING LASER BLASTERS... JUST A NORMAL PART OF MEEE-E-E-E!?

SHWOOSH!

WHAT THE..?!

FWOOP

UH...

DID I DO THAT?

FWOOP

SCRIBBLE SCRIBBLE SCRIBBLE SCRIBBLE SCRIBBLE

HELLO NIN WAH. CALIBRATION COMPLETE. STAND BY FOR INSTRUCTIONS.

OKAY...

...MAYBE NOT SO NORMAL!

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I'VE ESTABLISHED THE LINK. WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO TRANSMIT?

OKAY, FIRST OFF...

"WE ARE BUILDING A WEAPON TO FRY ZENITH FOR GOOD..."

"DON'T ASK HOW... IT'S ALL STUPID IN HERE."

MAKE SURE YOU FIND MY HEAD. THAT IS ESSENTIAL TO THE PLAN.

ASK HER IF MY BODY'S OKAY!

MITTENS. I'M NOT ASKING HER THAT.

ASK HER TO JUST PUT A BLANKET OR SOMETHING OVER ME TIL I GET-- HRRRMPH!!

SCRIBBLE SCRIBBLE SCRIBBLE SCRIBBLE SCRIBBLE SCRIBBLE SCRIBBLE SCRIBBLE SCRIBBLE

"STAY SAFE AND LAY LOW UNTIL MORNING..."

ALL RIGHT...

"AT 0630, GET TO THE COMPUTER ROOM AND PREPARE FOR ACTION."

AND MOST IMPORTANTLY

OH, NOW YOU TELL ME!

HELLO NIN WAH. CALIBRATION COMPLETE. STAND BY FOR INSTRUCT...

WE ARE BUILDING A WEAPON ZENITH FOR GOOD DON'T A IT'S ALL STUPID IN HERE.

MAKE SURE YOU FIND MY HEAD THAT IS ESSENTIAL TO THE PLA

ASK HER IF MY BODY'S OKAY. MITTENS I'M NOT ASKING HER THAT ASK HER TO PUT A BLAN OR SOMETHING OVER ME

STAY SAFE AND LAY LOW UNTIL MORNING

AT 0630 GET TO THE COMPUTER ROO AND PREPARE FOR ACTION

AND MOST IMPORTANTLY...

DESTROY THIS NOTE!

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WITH THE GLARE SHIELD ACTIVATED, NO ONE WILL BE ABLE TO SEE INSIDE

I JUST **STOLE** THIS SKYFLY, NO WAY I'M RIPPING UP THE UPHOLSTERY!

YOU'LL BE OKAY IN THERE, K.D.

HOPE YOU MAKE IT OUT OF THE DRIVE WITH EVERYONE ELSE.

SHE NEEDS A *NAME.*

BLUE WAH?

NIN WAH JUNIOR?

ROBO-WAH?

WAH-BOT? *HA!*

SO, I JUST NEED TO MAKE IT TIL MORNING, AND IT'LL ALL BE *OVER...*

ONE WAY OR THE OTHER.

THIS PLAN OF YOURS HAD BETTER WORK, PURPLE PANTS.

OH! THAT'S RIGHT!

I WAS GONNA USE THE SKYFLY'S SENSORS TO LOOK FOR CK'S HEAD!

NAF!

What a clever idea! Let's go back to your little ship, shall we?

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NIN WAH HAS ENDED THE TRANSMISSION, COMMANDER.

OKAY GOOD!

GO NOW, WE CAN—

NOW YOU CAN SHOW ME WHERE YOU'D LIKE TO BUILD THE TRANSDIGITAL PORTAL ARRAY!

WHERE? WHERE-EVER! I DON'T CARE!

SOME TIME LATER...

WELL, LET'S SEE... IT'S SO CLOSE TO THIS BIG ROCK THAT IT'D BE VERY DIFFICULT TO PLACE THE PROJECT HERE...

I'M BEGINNING TO LOSE FAITH IN THIS UTOPIAN PARADISE.

HELLO, COMMANDER!

BLUB!

NO, SORRY. I DON'T HAVE TIME TO CATCH YOU A BUTTERFLY OR... WAIT

FLUFFY!?!

basically, you need a lot of space!

FINALLY, MY DREAM CAME TRUE!

BLUB!

THERE'S THE MAYOR!

MAYOR, DO I REMIND YOU OF A PRETZEL?

OKAY, PEOPLE. EVERYONE JUST GO ABOUT YOUR BUSINESS! NO. I'M VERY— YOU SEE I CAN'T—

MAYOR, SIGN MY PETITION!

MAYOR, LET'S PLAY FREEZE TAG!

MAYOR, I NEED A TISSUE!

HAAALLP!

HOW MANY FISH CAN YOU NAME?

I LOST MY CRAYON!

DO YOU WANT A HAT?

WANT TO TRADE SHOES?

I SAW A LADYBUG!

GUESS WHAT NUMBER I'M THINKING OF?

IS IT LUNCH TIME YET?

IS IT GONNA SNOW?

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I see you managed to scrape up a new arm. Something familiar about it, wouldn't you say?

UH...

SNAP!

But I'm afraid it's company property. Gonna have to confiscate it.

HEY!

Or perhaps we should keep the arm...

...and just get rid of *you*.

TOO MUCH!

!

How does that s--

Uhh what's happening?

UURK!

BRZAP!

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NOW ARE YOU GONNA BEHAVE OR DO I HAVE TO SHOVE YOUR BUTT N A STORAGE LOCKER TIL MORNI--

Un--

HFF

hand--

HFF

CLONK!

ME!

PTOO!

OKAY, MISTER! HAVE IT..

HFF

SNRT

HFF

ZWIP

...YOUR WAY!

JCK!

KRACK!!

STUPID SHEEP!

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SHOO! SHOO!

THE MAYOR HAS IMPORTANT BUSINESS TO ATTEND TO!

GAW... BRAINS LIKE SPACE POTATOES, THESE PEOPLE.

...not EVEN space potatoes, just REGULAR ones

OH! AN INCOMING TRANSMISSION FROM NIN WAH, COMMANDER.

THE SHEEP IS OUT OF THE WAY THERE WAS A SUDDEN DIP IN HIS ENERGY AND I THRASHED HIM UP

SKWK SKRK

SCRIBBLE SCRIBBLE

THERE WAS RECENTLY A SORT OF SURGE HERE. I WONDER IF IT'S CONNECTED

ALL THESE DRIVE CITIZENS, ALL DESCENDING ON ME AT ONCE...

COULD IT BE BOGGING DOWN ZEN TH$ GRIP ON THE SYSTEM?

NIN WAH AGREES.

THE SHEEP IS OUT OF THE WAY THERE WAS A SUDDEN DIP IN HIS ENERGY AND I THRASHED HIM UP

THERE WAS RECENTLY A SORT OF SURGE HERE. I WONDER IF IT'S CONNECTED

...AT MIGHT EXPLAIN IT

GOOD WORK THAT GIVES US AN EDGE WE GO ON WITH THE PLAN THE PORTAL ARRAY IS UNDER CONSTRUCTION. CK OUT

OKAY, FLOSSY...

...LOOKS L[redacted] YOU'RE CAMPING OUT IN A LOCKER AFTER ALL.

DON'T EXPECT ANY ROOM SERVICE EITHER.

AND IF YOU'RE LUCKY, WE'LL ALL MAKE IT OUT OF HERE IN ONE...

WHOA!

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OH, YOU'VE GOT TO BE KIDDING ME, KITTY

GGHHGHLGHGH

THIS WAS YOUR "PLAN A"?

UGHHLGHHH

"STEP TWO: I GET MY HEAD SEPARATED FROM MY BODY AND THEN MY PLAN REALLY TAKES OFF."

REAL GOOD ONE, NUMPF.

YOU OWE ME ONE JACKET, SPACE CASE.

EW! EW! EWW!!

TPHLABT

SO. THAT JUST LEAVES YOU...

HOPE YOU PACKED YOUR TOOTHBRUSH.

'CAUSE YOU MIGHT BE IN THERE A WHILE!

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DEAR ALL YOU SPACERS

THIS LAST YEAR HAS BEEN TUMULTOUS. I'VE BEEN A PART OF MANY ANIMATED PROJECTS, MOST OF WHICH I CAN'T SHOW OFF JUST YET! AND I'VE HAD A VERY TOUGH TIME MAKING A PROFITABLE LIVING OF ANIMATING FROM HERE. I'M WAY IN THE RED AND I HAVE TO THINK OF FINDING FULL-TIME WORK, AND/OR MOVING TO LESS EXPENSIVE DIGS.

SO WHAT'S THE FUTURE FOR COMMANDER KITTY? BLEAK!! I TOOK A CHANCE TRYING TO DO MY COMIC FULL-TIME, AND IT DIDN'T TAKE OFF AS I HOPED, WHICH CONTRIBUTED IN A WAY TO MY CURRENT SITUATION. AND I'VE ALLOWED IT TO LAY FALLOW MUCH TO MY CHAGRIN AND THE DISSAPPOINTMENT OF YOU ALL, MY WONDERFUL FANS.

RIGHT NOW, I HAVE TOO MANY COMMITMENTS AND NOT ENOUGH ENERGY TO KEEP CK GOING AS I WANT.

IS KICKSTARTER THE ANSWER? I'M NOT SURE... TO PAY MY BILLS AND PUT MY DEBTS IN ORDER WOULD TAKE A CAMPAIGN I AM NOT CONFIDENT WOULD SUCCEED. SO MY PLAN IS AS I STATED EARLIER.

I AM IN GOOD SPIRITS (AND MY FERRET DOODLE SAYS HI) BUT IT IS TEMPERED WHEN I THINK OF CK AND HOW ITS HISTORY IS SO SPOTTY AND ITS FUTURE UNCERTAIN. SUCH IS THE LIFE FOR MANY CARTOONS.

IT'S BEEN OVER A YEAR SINCE I HAD THE CHANCE TO UPDATE. AND WITH THIS, I HOPE NOT TO PUT IT TO REST, BUT JUST SAY... HEY!... IF YOU'RE READING THIS, I APPRECIATE IT SO MUCH!

MY PATREON IS STILL AROUND, ALTHOUGH ITS FUNCTION HAS BEEN ADJUSTED TOWARDS THE ART THAT I CAN PRODUCE IN MY DOWN TIME.

WELL, IT LOOKS LIKE I'M RUNNING OUT OF ROOM. BETTER SIGN OFF. HERE'S TO 2018, HERE'S TO YOU ALL.

SEE YOU IN THE FUNNIES!

PATREON.COM/FERRETFACE 12-26-2017 STEVENWARREN

Hey again!!

Times are pretty good lately. I have long-time work and an increase in FREE TIME!! To make a long story short, I have NEW CK COMICS to share very soon! I've written an ENDING! and I'm happy to say I'll be drawing more to finally complete this crazy story!!

I have about 6 (six) episodes ready to go now, and I will be sharing them exclusively for my PATREON* people who have been generous to help support my art in this crazy long dry spell. All my posts for December are free! If you choose to sign up, you will see the new CK in advance and at the start of 2020 I hope you'll continue to show your support. STAY TUNED, SPACERS!!

(*PATREON.COM/FERRETFACE)

It FEELS really good to announce this!

Scotty A

OKAY... "STAY SAFE 'TIL 0630."

EASIER SAID THAN--

...OH...

A GALLEY?

I COULD EAT.

CK

SOCKS

CK

HOW ABOUT *YOU*, CK? FEELING A BIT PECKISH, ARE YOU?

OH I *FORGOT*! YOU'RE JUST A FREAKISH TRANS-PORTER ACCIDENT OF A *HEAD* NOW!

ROOT ROOT

WHAT'S THAT? "PLEASE TAKE MY LAST YOGURT, NIN WAH?"

CK!

THIS ONE HERE WITH YOUR DUMB *STICKY NOTE* ON IT, YOU SAY?

WELL IF YOU INSIST!

BEAR IN MIND, I *AM* PRETTY HUNGRY... I COULD PROBABLY POLISH OFF A COUPLE OF--

POP!

CK!

KEE-RASHK!!

CK!

DID...

DID *YOU* WANT TO LICK THE LID?

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